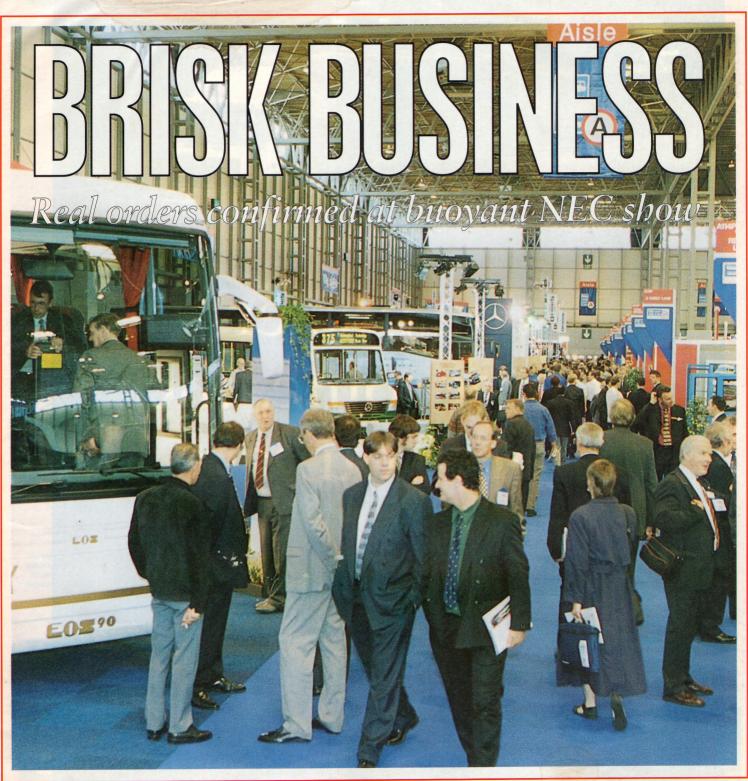
\*\*\* COACH & BUS '97 SHOW REVIEW ISSUE \*\*\*



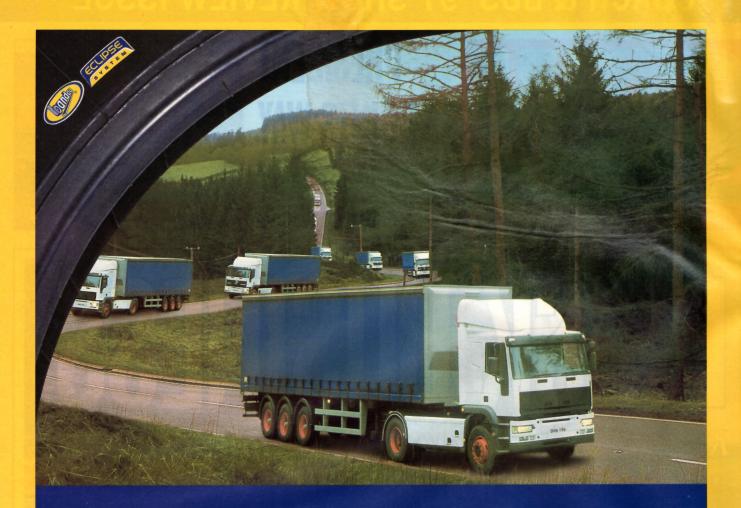
# PRESIDENT POINTS WAY

Lowfloor decker a star of show





ALSO IN THIS ISSUE: All the PSV and Show News 4-23 Tour News 25 & 26 Legal News 29 & 31 Marksman 32 Diary 35 Letters 37 Manufacturing 40 & 41 RF Test 43-46 Deals 48-49 Back-up 50 People 75



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#### EDITORIA

# A show of strength

MOIR LOCKHEAD embraced the buoyant mood at last week's Coach & Bus 97 show when he said: "Everybody should be here." Not only was this shop window for the PSV world a true barometer of the health of the industry



but it was a clear and unequivocal statement of its ability to respond to the needs of the market.

While the trade show is not a suitable venue for the general public to come and gaze at the hardware on display, it is certainly the perfect place to dispel any misconceptions among local and national politicians.

Nobody could have left NEC Hall 5 last week without taking away a strong conviction that this industry is able and willing to respond to the challenges ahead.

Yet the changes across all sectors over the past two years are nothing short of remarkable. As the Travel West Midlands order, among others, teaches us, lowfloor accessible buses are now the norm; what had previously been minority attempts to introduce passenger-friendly interior designs, is now close to becoming the norm; Optare's penchant for exterior design is no longer the exception.

Any fears that choice of coach body and chassis will become restricted are without foundation. The selection on offer has not only widened, but the quality on offer in all sizes of coach is now among the best.

However, the most rewarding aspect of the whole show is the ability of operators to place real orders. We're not simply talking about the staged hand-overs, but the number of genuine occasions when cheque books opened and operators signed on the dotted line.

Without this endorsement of all the good work on behalf of chassis and body manufacturers, the show would have a hollow meaning and the message to the outside world would be misleading. Instead the industry can take heart - but without

risking any pause which would allow complacency to creep in.

Given any sort of historical perspective, most trade shows are a catalogue of success and failure in equal measure. We can all remember high-profile launches that became commercial disasters. However, the legacy of the 1997 show is the universal willingness to focus on meeting customer needs.







Telephone 01709 700600 24 hour NEOPART 0802 587133 24 hour NEOSERVICE 0802 587134 Fax 01709 700007



# events

**10-22 October:** SmartCity '97, smartcard technology, five venues throughout UK. Tickets £75. Contact Holly Jones, tel 01763 249933 **16-18 October:** Mitcar, Paris. Details 00 33 141 299727

**17-22 October:** Coach and Bus '97, Hallen, Kortrijk, Belgium. Details 00 32 51 226060, fax /9273

#### 27 - 30 October:

Bus Business, Verona, Italy. Contact CIEMME, on fax 00 39 464 551 938

28 October: Omnibus Society meeting - Ensign Bus and London Pride by Peter Newman. London Transport HQ, 55 Broadway, London SW1, 1845 hrs. Details from Barry Le Jeune on 0171 918 3295

29 October: London's Transport Future, Chartered Institute of Transport Conference at The TowerThistle Hotel, London E1. Speakers include Glenda Jackson and Steven Norris. Details on 0171 233 7600, fax 0171 233 7611

5-6 November: British
National Congress of World
Road Association (PIARC),Transportation Beyond The
Millennium, Searching for
the real economic and environmental solutions. Manchester Conference Centre,
UMIST, Sackville Street,
Manchester M60 1QD.
Details on 0171 921 4323,
0171 921 2214

10-11 November: UITP conference - Safe Public Transport, Safe Cities - plus security exhibition. Maritim proArte Hotel, Berlin. Details on +49 30 20 335. fax +49 30 20 334 209 12-15 November: Community Transport 97, Norbreck Castle Hotel Blackpool. Details on 0161 366 6685 or 0161 351 1475. E-mail: cta.man@dial.pipex. com, http://dspace.dial. pipex.com/town/terrace/pi 21/index.htm

21 November: National Planning Aid Conference, Gateshead Civic Centre. Details on 0191 222 7812 23 January 1998: CBW's Coach Industry Awards, Metropole Hotel, NEC. Full details in a future issue of this magazine.

A total of 515 vehicles includes 25 Jonckheere artic coaches,

# Artics complete huge

#### **By Mark Williams**

STAGECOACH has ordered 25 Jonckheere articulated coaches plus Mercedes-Benz 0814D midibuses to complete its 515-vehicle order.

The Jonckheeres represent a swing from its articulated coach use, previously dominated by Plaxton, and continuation of its policy to increase attention on high-capacity inter-urban services.

Volvo's name, however, remains firmly in the frame: all 25 coaches are based on B10M, while Volvo also gets an order for 100 Olympians, with Alexander RL bodywork. Dennis' Dart SLF is still a favourite, 100 having been ordered with Alexander

ALX200 bodies, and 100 of Dennis' Trident SLF (see page 21) are being built for Stage-coach with ALX400 bodies.

"We remain convinced that the introduction of new vehicles generates a significant cost advantage," said Stagecoach chairman Brian Souter. "For the first time, we will have a standardised, full range of low-entry buses."

Mr Souter praised MAN for its approach to sell single-deck chassis, this year netting an order for 150 18.220LEs with ALX300 bodywork: "MAN has recognised Stage-coach's position as a major global transport operator with a visionary long-term supply agreement that encompasses all ownership

costs, including warranties, spare parts prices and product support," he said.

When the order is delivered, Stagecoach's UK fleet average age drops to seven years against an industry average of ten.

■ STAGECOACH'S decision to make a five-year commitment to MAN was made within three months.

MAN's Richard Noy nonetheless said the order for 150 MAN chassis was hardwon and involved substantial commitment from MAN.

"It is much easier for a British supplier to make a long-term arrangement with a British operator, since the price of product and operating conditions are more closely linked," said Mr Noy.

"We have currency fluctuations and other things to take into account, so to have struck a five-year agreement gives me particular pleasure. What we have done is to lock together four elements; product, after-sales service, parts availability and parts pricing.

"Having sold all of these chassis, we quite clearly want Stagecoach to buy their parts from us. But I must emphasise to other operators that we can produce any type of agreement with sales.

"We want operators to have no 'ifs and buts', and that means structuring a sale to suit."

First of the MAN chassis will be at Alexanders by June.

# DSA may expand same-day service for theory test entrants

THE Driving Standards Agency says it may expand the same-day service for theory test candidates to more than the current 22 test centres.

"If there is high demand for the scheme, DSA will consider extending it to other test centres," said a spokesman. "The fee will be £25, rather than the usual £15, to

recover the higher costs of providing the extra staff and equipment needed for marking at individual test centres."

The DSA confirmed that only car and motorcycle candidates will be made to wait 10 days before taking another practical driving test. PCV and HGV drivers will wait just three days.

#### **Epsom contracts**

IN CBW dated 9 October, we inadvertently suggested that London United had reassigned contracts to Epsom Coaches due to driver shortages. This was incorrect, and the story should have referred to London General, as quotes from its md suggested. We apologise unreservedly for this error, and for any confusion it may have caused to all three companies to which the story refers.

#### **Orders flood in at Coach & Bus '97**

PLAXTON was besieged with buyers at Coach & Bus 97, taking orders for 83 vehicles in the three days, span-

ning 27 operators.

Among coaches bought are the first B7R Prima, going to James Bevan of Gloucestershire, 17 Volvo B10Mbased Excaliburs and Premieres for Go-Ahead Group, and 10 Premiere 350s on

olvo B10Murs and PreLogans of County Antrim

has ordered four Premieres on B10M and three Cheetah midicoaches - based on Mercedes-Benz Vario. Elcocks is taking two further Cheetahs, and Berkeley of Paulton has bought the show example. In all, 11 Cheetahs were sold.

The show Excalibur on Javelin GX is going to Tudor of Stamford, and a B10M-based Excalibur to O'Donnell's of Letterkenny, Co Donnegal. National Holidays has opted for three Premiere 350s on B10M, while InterUrbans on the same chassis are being bought by Maynes - which is having two - and a single coach for Meredith of Lydgate, near Malpas.

Bus orders included 16 Beaver 2s for Mainline.



Plaxton: didn't have long to wait for buyers on opening day of the show

0814D Mercedes midibuses, and 100 Trident SLFs

# Stagecoach bus order



Richard Noy, bus manager of MAN; Brian Juffs, Stagecoach group technical engineer; Boud Heilijgers, senior vice president of MAN; Stagecoach's exec director Barry Hinkley; and Dr Jurgen Knorpp, md of MAN UK, strike the deal

#### Shamrock to sue the 'Magnificent Seven'

SOUTH Wales operator Shamrock Coaches is to start civil proceedings to recover £36,000 from the 'Magnificent Seven.'

The seven drivers pleaded guilty to charges of theft, having kept fares in duplicate ticket machines (CBW, 9 October). But when they claimed they had been owed wages, they were sentenced to just 120 community service. One was given a year's probation.

A Shamrock spokesman said the sentences were 'ridiculous.' He said that he could not get any explanation for why the case was moved to Cardiff for sentencing, with a new judge, after the original judge had already suggested the men could expect a custodial sentence.

The firm vehemently denied underpaying the defendants, and denies the allegation made in court that wage records which were available had been destroyed by Shamrock. He said wage records showed the men earned £232 for working a 48-hour week on evening shifts and £192 on days.

He maintained that the firm had only deducted the normal tax and national insurance contributions from their wages and he estimated that they took home on average more than £150 for working days. Anyone who picked up £33 take home pay had only worked for one day, said Mr Owen.

Calling for the Crown Prosecution Service to appeal against the sentences, Mr Owen said that it had been a travesty of justice. He had been flabbergasted by the mitigation.

Criticising the way the CPS had conducted the case, Mr Owen said that Shamrock had provided contracts of employment, wage slips for the past year and computer records showing the times the seven men had worked but the prosecution had not called him to the witness stand to produce these records. They had just sat there after the men had pleaded guilty. It is understood that the case will be reviewed by the CPS following a letter of protest from Alison Jones.

#### **Cowie becomes Arriva** and orders £10m plus

ARRIVA is the new title for Cowie with the group's four divisions renamed: Passenger Services; Automotive Solutions; Motor Retailing; and Bus and Coach. A high-quality brand and corporate livery are promised for the bus operations. Meanwhile, Arriva has ordered 50 Alexander ALX400 lowfloor doubledecks in a mixed batch of £10 millionworth of buses... a small fraction of the group's order for 1998/99.

Cowie is getting an as yet unspecified number of ALX300, ALX200 and ALX100 buses. The ALX400s will be on DAF's DB250LF, the ALX300s on SB220LF, the ALX200s on Dennis Dart

SLF, and the ALX100s, on Mercedes-Benz Vario chassis-cowls.

Most of the deckers are likely to be going into London. Final numbers for the other models in the first batch have not been set. "The ALX400 derives from Alexander's ALX500 series... leading the way in providing sophisticated lowfloor double-decks in export markets," said Bob McLeod, md of Hughes DAF.

"Together, we have now worked with Alexander to advance the concept of rigorous, lowfloor deckers for the UK which can give access to all, safety, and comfort. The ALX400 will do just that, giving us a 2.55-metre body width."



ALX 400 is based on export ALX500

#### **INSIDE TRANSIT** THIS WEEK

Stagecoach is looking to raise money in the City. Could this mean major acquisition is on the cards or is it merely routing money management? growth in passenger loadings has caused Great Western Trains to sign a decreased subsidy and new trains franchise deal with OPRAF to cope with rapidly increasing demand. Lowfloor buses at Coach and Bus 97 showed that the industry is on target to meet regulations for more accessible buses due to come in force around the turn of the century. Stagecoach surprised many by signing a 'visionary' contract for the supply of new buses with German manufacturer MAN.

The Rail Regulator has outlined his plans for the phased introduction of more competition between train operating companies in 'The New Railway.' Virgin Rail is talking of a revenue sharing deal with Railtrack if it gets 140 mph track speeds when it introduces its £500 million fleet of state-of-the-art tilting trains.

A train company has changed its name to Silverlink. Find out which one. Henlys is moving the emphasis from dealing in cars to building bus and coach bodies. Plaxtons is the major influence on its profits. We have full details.

Thameslink Rail is one of the train operating companies pressure group 'Save Our Railways' says is least likely to succeed and most likely to fail. Managing director Euan Cameron has other ideas. We have spoken to him and he says his company is already going places.

Stock market news, tender results and all the latest job and tender classified ads

WALTER ALEXANDER says the fire which destroyed a storage area in its Falkirk factory has not caused any hiccups in production. The blaze destroyed a number of components but did not affect the production line, said a spokesman. Replacement parts seats, glass and other materials - have been sourced, and the Fire Service is still investigating the cause of the fire.

STAFFORDSHIRE component supplier Direct Parts has been made sole supplier for two German engineering companies. Alfred Heyd, based near Stuttgart, and Commercial Hydraulics, an American company with an East German manufacturing plant, has picked Direct Parts to supply track rod ends, draglinks, joints and other components, and pumps and fan motors from Commercial Hydraulics.

STAGECOACH and First-Bus have been accused of 'creaming off' passengers on ScotRail's Ayr and **Cumbernauld to Glasgow** corridors, causing a third of commuters to desert the rail service. Strathclyde PTE subsidises the rail service, and says bus times using the M77 are now shorter than rail, and fares half the price.

MERCEDES-Benz 0405N users who want air conditioning can have it added economically and quickly by MAC-Hispacold, which has designed it into the existing air ducting for convenient retro-fit. The system combines heating and ventilation, automatically controlled with a single dial.

■ ASCOM Monetel of France has won the contract to supply the entire city of Montpellier with contactless, magnetic ticketing. The new system will include bus positioning and intermodality with tram and bus operations.

German 'invasion' a factor in shifting buying patterns

# Coaches down, buses up, market changing

#### By Mark Williams

WITH MAN, Mercedes-Benz and Neoplan entering the fray for big-bus sales, and the extra coach choice announced at Coach and Bus 97, 1998 could change the UK sales picture beyond recognition.

Mercedes-Benz, for exam-

ple, has already sold 100 0405Ns to TWM, MAN 150 chassis to Stagecoach, and almost certainly at the expense of other manufacturers. Market share will shift, but the good news is that the bus market seems destined to grow further.

In the final analysis, coach sales in 1997 will be down by more than 14% on 1996, significant further deliveries before December being unlikely. On the other hand, the bus market based on the first nine months' sales is up by more than 14%, with deliveries before Christmas yet to show.

Predictions for the coach market next year vary but, despite a general consensus that continued hard-sell of late secondhand stock will reduce the potential, operators have had an above-average trading year.

Sales of British-built vehicles may still, however, be at the mercy of the strong pound, which could favour imports.

In coach sales, Volvo has lost almost 6% of a reduced market, and Scania less than a single percentage point. The other main marques have gained ground, Dennis getting around 3% more of the market with its Javelin.

Volvo can be far from gloomy about its bus sales, however, gaining around 7% share, at the expense of virtually every other manufacturer but Dennis. But watch this space; low-volume entrants into the marketplace will see the picture change in 1998.

	Sept	tember		Year	<b>Year to Date</b>		
	1997	1996	1997	%	1996	%	
Volvo	98	115	1282	43.2	1210	42.0	
Dennis	137	132	994	33.5	879	30.5	
Scania	19	17	178	6.0	248	8.6	
Optare	31	17	172	5.8	185	6.4	
DAF Bus	6	13	108	3.6	126	4.4	
Iveco Bus	2	2	28	0.9	22	0.8	
Bova	0	1	44	1.5	40	1.4	
Others	6	12	160	5.4	172	6.0	
Totals	299	308	2966	100.0	2882	100.0	
		C	oach				
Volvo	33	19	460	46.7	609	52.9	
Dennis	14	16	175	17.7	171	14.9	
Scania	6	2	82	8.3	111	9.6	
Iveco Bus	2	2	28	2.8	22	1.9	
DAF Bus	1	3	81	8.2	85	7.4	
Bova	0	1	44	4.5	40	3.5	
Others	3	2	116	11.8	113	9.8	
Totals	59	45	986	100.0	1151	100.0	
			Bus				
Volvo	65	96	822	41.5	601	34.7	
Dennis	123	116	819	41.4	708	40.9	
Scania	13	15	96	4.8	137	7.9	
Optare	31	17	172	8.7	185	10.7	
DAF Bus	5	10	27	1.4	41	2.4	
Others	3	9	44	2.2	59	3.4	
Totals	240	263	1980	100.0	1731	100.0	

Coach and Bus Registrations

the Isle of Man and Channel Islands. Source: SMMT



MAN now has presence in the UK bus market

#### **New products and orders a plenty for Scania**

SCANIA'S Coach & Bus 97 was a story of plenty of new products and plenty of orders for them.

In all, the Worksop dealer took orders for 35 vehicles, including 25 for Bus Eireann's express operation, four for Lucketts (see page 11) and five for Applebys.

The Bus Eireann vehicles are L94IB Centurys, 10 of which are 49 seaters with toilet, and the remaining 15 53 seaters. Deliveries are starting early in the new year.

Applebys of Lincolnshire ordered three K113TRB tri-axles with Century bodywork, and two K124IBs with Century bodywork.

They will be used on the company's extensive tour, private hire and excur-

Two of Lucketts' vehicles will be the first KL124IBs to be delivered in the UK, the others two L941IBs with Inter-Century bodywork.

"The fantastic news is that we had no fewer than 438 positive leads for new vehicles at the show," said Ian Hall, sales manager for Scania Bus and Coach. "It really was an absolutely superb show."

The remaining vehicle is a new L941IB with InterCentury bodywork for Halesowen operator Ludlows, which also bought a second-hand Irizar at the show.

The Scania in España livery competition was won by Maynes of Buckie, and the prize draw by Reg's Coaches.



# The Business... as usual.

The Metrorider is the bus to beat. With over 3,000 in service all over the world it is widely regarded as way ahead of any vehicle in its class. In short... it's the business.

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conditions. A new, optional, easy clean hard trim interior finish makes maintenance easier too.

Metrorider 4 comes in three lengths and two widths. Its integral construction offers optimum comfort for passengers and an optional enlarged driver's compartment makes it extremely rewarding and safe to drive.

Another superior vehicle, from Optare, as usual.



OPTIMUM, THAT'S OPTARE

#### **Don takes** a brake

FRICTION material specialist Don is to take its brake-training experience directly to coach and bus fleets with the introduction of specifically-tailored onsite courses.

Marketing manager, Alistair Hill, said: "Over the past few years we have taken various approaches to brake training ranging from regionally-based grammes, one-stop conferences like Braking Into The 21st Century' at Telford and a limited number of courses at operators' premises.

"It is the third area where I see the greatest benefits for fleets.'

Typical topics may include: disc braking developments and implications, the best asbestos-free materials, preparing for the Ministry test, compatibility and practical problem solving, preventing brake noise, reducing performance variations and counteracting high disc/drum/pad wear.

#### **KPMG** wins the **Russian vote**

A MAJOR PROJECT to help develop the Russian bus manufacturing industry on behalf of the Russian Ministry of Transport has been won by KPMG's Birmingham-based Global Automotive Practice.

The work is part of the World Bank sponsored Urban Bus Project, which aims to deliver an effective, efficient and affordable public bus transport system in cities across Russia.

KPMG is helping to locate potential investors, suppliers of bus designs and technology, and manufacturers of major components and sub-assemblies.

The market is according to KPMG's Simon Quarrell. "120,000 buses need replacing and that is a market worth £6 billion. This year alone there is demand for 18,500 mid-tolarge sized buses, 4,000 articulated buses and 22,000 minibuses.

 Contact Mr Quarrell on 0121 232 3000 or 0467 464831



Spanish example: the Noge will be officially launched in November when right-hand-drive vehicles will be seen

Order on first day of Coach & Bus 97 when...

# Best Way 'smitten' by Noge

By Mark Williams

THE first Noge coach to reach Britain attracted an order on the first day of the show - despite the show example being a Spanish left-hand-drive vehicle. The coach - to be imported on MAN chassis by Alf Moseley Continental - will be officially launched in righthand-drive form in late November, when examples will be seen.

But the borrowed Noge Catalan on the MAN stand was just the thing for Best Way Travel, of Cleveland.

The operator was smitten by the heavily-styled vehicle straight away, said AMC md designate Vernon Edwards: "Best Way is taking a 3.5metre example, though a cles will be available next year."

AMC has placed a preliminary order for around 50 MAN coach chassis as



Alf Moseley (left) signs up as agent for MAN

part of its status as a new, official MAN coach agent. The 13.220 chassis will get a 3.4-metre body, the 18.310 will get the 3.5, and the triaxle 24.400 will be a 3.7. "These coaches will have a lot of standard features regarded as extras by many coachbuilders," said Mr Edwards.

He said AMC's Marcopolo range had been in great demand, with eight firm inquiries to buy, and an order from Wilkins of Cymmer, South Wales, which is having a Dennis Javelin 245 with 53 seats.

# M opens new Internet info si

launched a new site on the Internet last Thursday, offering public transport users general information about fares, initiatives and products, as well as enabling users to access timetables at home or in the office.

The launch is the first phase of a much-expanded facility that will come on stream during the next two months, when a 'Journey Planner' facility will encourage users to plan their route in advance of their journey, and also offer access to the National Express and

Railtrack sites through a hyperlink.

Current information on offer comprises a news site, timetables, information on travel cards and special offers, details of company travel plans and on student cards together with more general information on private hire, lost property etc. A separate section is available for comments, and visual information is also transmitted.

TWM is working in partnership with Pindar, the print and electronic media company, to develop the Internet site, which will be gradually expanded

and constantly updated, to provide a valuable new source of transport information.

TWM chief executive David Leeder said the Internet was rapidly becoming a popular source of information for all age groups. "Getting information to passengers is one of our priorities and, by using the Internet, passengers can check what travelcards we offer, what time the bus runs, and then print off the appropriate timetables."

TWM's Internet address is http://www.travelwm.co.uk

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THE REASONS WHY

#### LET'S SUMMARISE WHAT'S ON OFFER

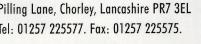
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- The knowledge that you are dealing with a major company experienced in satisfying the demands of your industry and approved to ISO 9002 standards.

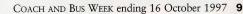




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Strong Alizee line-up joined by triaxle EOS

# Two new Van Hools for UK at the show

#### **By Mark Barton**

VAN HOOL used Coach and Bus 97 to show off no fewer than two new coaches for the UK. And there are customers for both.

Although the Astrobel in the colours of high-profile truck operator Eddie Stobart deflected some of the interest in the mainstream line-up, Van Hool's stand was liberally sprinkled with new shape Alizees for British customers.

Cyril Kenzie bought one on Volvo B10M for his Shepreth, Cambridgeshire operation (*CBW*, 9 October). Fittingly, in Van Hool's 50th anniversary year, it was the 50th Alizee bought by Kenzies. It was also 50 years ago that Cyril Kenzie bought his first coach. Specification on the new vehicle includes 48 seats, air conditioning and removable centre washroom.

Supplied through Moseley PCV were two new-style Alizees for Whitelaw Coaches of Scotland. The show vehicle in Whitelaw's colours is fitted with an off-side centre washroom and 48 Royal Comfort seats.

Next to it on the Moseley section of Van Hool's stand was a 48-seat new Alizee for Tellings Golden Miller fitted with rear washroom and servery. All in all, Van Hool is expecting to sell 100 coaches through its three UK dealers over the coming year. Also debuting on the Van Hool stand was the EOS 230 - the three-axle version of the 200 already known and operating in this country.

Fully integral, it is available with either DAF or MAN engine. The striking example at the show was one of two for Hallmark Cars and is fitted with 28 recliners all facing a table. There's a full kitchen at the rear and individual eightchannel headphones plus video monitors.

Hauling it all around on corporate work is a monster



**Kenzies among liberal sprinkling of new Alizees** 

400 bhp MAN D2866 engine. Hallmark is one of the biggest EOS customers in the UK.

Next to the new 230 at the show was one of six EOS 90s for the Lutonbased company. Hallmark now runs a total of 14 EOS - 12 90s and 2 230s. Oh, and by the way, if you're wondering about that Eddie Stobart Astrobel, don't - it's for inter-company work and carrying around members of his 22,000-strong fan club.



Leicester Carriage-bodied Isuzu - cost £60,000

#### Isuzu enters European PSV fray

LEICESTER Carriage Builders' all-new Isuzubased minicoach marks the entry of the world's biggest truck manufacturer into the European PSV market.

The £60,000 Marlin 25 seater is built on Isuzu's 6.2-tonne NPR chassis assembled in Leyland. It comes with a two-year unlimited parts and labour warranty.

Built from aluminium and GRP, the bodywork should be very robust, and the chassis' long pedigree on American roads will underpin sales, says Leicester Carriage Builders' general manager Tony Bull.

"The vehicle came about because, very simply, we liked the front end of the Isuzu chassis," said Mr Bull. "So we asked Isuzu, for whom we are an agent, if we could come up with a body to fit it."

After three months design and six months on the factory floor, the Marlin was the result. The vehicle on display at Coach & Bus '97 was a production prototype with 23 seats and courier, but there will be a 7.5-tonne coach in 1998 carrying 33

The Marlin features a large boot, and will come with other options including air-con by Webasto and a retarder made by CLAM.

Production is expected to be between 10 and 15 vehicles in the next 12 months. Its first order for the Marlin... a vehicle for Coventry City Football Club, already in build at the Co-op-owned company.

# Lucketts and Bus Eireann help to make Scania's day

BY day two of the show, Scania had picked up orders for 29 vehicles, including two for its all-new K124 chassis from Lucketts. Included in the total are 25 air-conditioned Centurys for Bus Eireann, destined for the company's extensive express work. All will have Scania's new L94IB chassis with ZF automatic gearbox, destination blind and other extras specified by the Dublin-based operator.

Luckett's order, made at

the show, is for two Inter-Centurys and two Centurys with K124 chassis. This offers a new engine and self-levelling suspension, among other refinements. "Scania is well-liked by our fitters and by our customers.

"Now that they've got used to it, the Comfort Shift gearbox is liked by our drivers," said chairman David Luckett. Joint md of the company, Ian Luckett, said the gearbox had given no problems.



Shake on it: Luckett's chairman David Luckett and Scania Bus and Coach md Don MacKintosh seal the deal, flanked by Irizar marketing director Jose Aizpuru, Luckett's joint md Ian Luckett, Scania sales manager Ian Hall and joint md Steve Luckett



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Confirmation at the show

# TWM: orders for over 200 **lowfloors**

#### **By Mark Williams**

NATIONAL Express Group subsidiary Travel West Midlands confirmed orders for more than 200 lowfloor easy access vehicles at Coach and Bus 97. All buses ordered will have space for wheelchairs, shopping and buggies and will cover the whole spectrum from minibuses to double deckers.

As already announced, TWM is expecting 100 Mercedes Benz 0405N single deckers (Show Daily, 9 October), which are 12metre integral buses built in Mannheim, but fitted out in the UK by UVG of Portsmouth. They will replace double deckers on full-size bus routes with a promise that service frequencies may also be enhanced. The first Mercedes vehicles will be used to upgrade routes that will feed into the Midland Metro from Autumn, next

TWM's first lowfloor double decker was officially handed over by Hughes DAF and is the new Optare Spectra - the UK's first lowfloor double decker

One of a pair of buses purchased by TWM, the first will be based at Birmingham Central garage, and will be operating on selected Birmingham routes to test passenger responses. The second will soon be delivered to Travel Dundee. which joined TWM at the beginning of this year, and will be the first lowfloor



Ton up: one of a 100 Mercedes 0405N lowfloors ordered by Nat Ex's TWM subsidiary

decker in service in Scotland. The new Spectra is a 10.7 metre long 79 seater built on the DAF DB250 LF chassis. This uses the drivetrain of the existing DB250 with the 8.65-litre DAF RS200 engine, driving through a Voith fullyautomatic gearbox.

The lowfloor, at 320mm, brings the overall height of the new Spectra down to 4.17 metres, meaning the vehicle is suitable for operators who normally specify low-height double deckers.

TWM's midibus contingent will be enlarged by the delivery of 70 Wrights bodied Volvo B6BLE single

deckers, many of which have been in service in the Walsall, Wolverhampton and West Bromwich area for up to a year.

To complete the 200vehicle order, 30 of the new Optare Solo small buses have been purchased and these will replace existing minibuses in the Black Country operating area.

TWM has already stated it will only purchase lowfloor vehicles, to make a positive contribution to the upgrading of public services. By the end of next year well over 350 lowfloor buses will be in service, and further investment will be made in 1998 to build on the success of the four major types.

David Leeder, chief executive of TWM, said the announcement of real orders showed National Express group's continuing commitment to investing in better public transport.

"The easy-access facility which allows passengers to wheel on pushchairs, wheelchairs and shopping trolleys has already proved popular with passengers in the West Midlands, so much so, that passenger numbers are now rising for the first time in years.'

# **Neoplan UK weighs i**

NEOPLAN UK, the new trading name for SJ Carlton, sole importer of the Neoplan range of coaches and buses, is extending the choice of lowfloor buses the heavy-duty N4015 12 metre for less than £100,000.

The N4015 is a body-

on-chassis design which combines Neoplan build quality with a highly-competitive price ticket as a consequence of the Csepel 844 underframe sourced in Hungary.

The engine is the 8.2litre C-series Cummins built at Darlington. The

gearbox is the industry standard ZF HP590 autowith matic integral retarder and the braking system has ABS.

Although the axle manufacturer, Raba, may not be a familiar name in Britain the Hungarian company and its products

are respected throughout the world.

Managing director, Stuart Johnson, said: "This is not a compromise bus. It is full-width, has 22.5 inch wheels, is full lowfloor without step for 60 per cent of its length and is fully warranted by Neoplan UK." A variety of specs and interior layouts is offered.

The price of the entrylevel Neoplan Cityliner integral coach has been shaved down to £189,000 - for a Mercedes-Benz V6 340bhp two axle highliner with 48 seats and rear mounted toilet.

Reducing the engine power has enabled Neoplan to use the new sixspeed ZF S6-1600 gearbox rather than the eight-speed

as used in the three-axle coach which continues to be available.

The N116/2 coach is single-glazed as standard and is fitted with Sutrak air-conditioning in a roofmounted pod which is moved over the front axle. Double glazing is available but seating capacity is then reduced to 46.

Neoplan independent front suspension with lift and lower is retained as part of the integral construction and the N116/2 specification includes: Kiel R80 recliners with lapbelts, fold down arm rests, seatback nets, head rest covers. Electrical heated/ adjustable mirrors, central locking, cruise control, ABS, ASR and alloy wheels are also included.



Yours for £189k: best value luxury coach at show says Neoplan UK md Stuart Johnson

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IvecoBus sets its sights high

# **Assault on** coaches and minis market



AW will stock Mellor Opus 25-seat coach - the only bodywork on Iveco 59-12

#### **By Mark Williams**

A BIGGER SHARE of coach, minicoach and minibus markets during 1998 is IVECOBUS' aim and, at Coach & Bus 97, it showed a new inter-urban coach, its 'replacement' for the Bedford PJK, an exclusive



Maxim built on EuroMidi 80

Mellor minicoach, and an entire range of Daily-based vehicles.

The centrepiece of the stand was undoubtedly the Intalina - a lowheight Body from Beulas with a downrated 290bhp EuroRider chassis and eight cubic metres of luggage space. The emphasis, as with all IvecoBus products, is on styling, said Harry Chambers, manager of Ivecobus, and that demanded a coach builder's product.

We decided that bus builders cannot break away from the traditional bus shape without incurring prohibitive costs," said Mr Chambers. "We decided to talk to Beulas, and the Intalina is the result.'

The show example, with 57 seats, is expected to be the benchmark for the marque, springboarding IvecoBus into the sub-3.2-metre business which Mr Chambers reckons forms 30% of coaches sold. The design is expected to further reduce fuel consumption... already one of its bigger sister's primary sales weapons. On a 200,000 miles per year operation, fuel savings for the 350bhp Stergo touring coach can be as much as £10,000, says Mr Chambers, and

over a 15-year life with current fuel taxation policies, that could mean almost the entire cost of two coaches -£296,000 - saved.

The Intalina comes with six-speed ZF gearbox, Telma Focal retarder and ABS as standard. It is expected to contribute to total large-vehicle sales for the Ratby-based AW Group of more than 100 vehicles during

IvecoBus' replacement Bedford PJK is the stylish EuroMidi 80 Indcar Maxim: "The industry has become obsessed about the 7.5-tonne gross limit," said Mr Chambers. "Some of our competitors believe that they have to cram the maximum number of seats on to a transport chassis, because the vehicle will be permitted in the third lane of motorways.

"In our view, passenger comfort and safety should not take second place to traffic conditions. believe that, the larger the coach, the higher percentage of its mileage is likely to be spent on motorways. We have, therefore, taken the EuroMidi 80 chassis which is designed for 8.2 tonnes. We are talking about a very substantial chassis.

"The Maxim has 'I want to travel in that' appeal."

The 29-seat coach can be built with entrance behind the front axle, or for airport transfer work, with double doors placed in the centre. It has a 180bhp, 5.9-litre engine, ABS, air suspension on the rear, and a sixspeed gearbox.

IvecoBus's attack on the minibus and minicoach market is spearheaded by steel-floored DailyBus and DailyCoach ranges, all fitted with three-point belts to European safety standards. All, from the 35.10 15 seater to the 18-seat 49.10 Daily-Coach will be built by IvecoBus, and have dealers which are fully approved. To provide back-up in the 3.5-tonne group, the 51-dealer network will be grown to 70 by the end of 1998.

The big sister of the DailyCoach range is Mellor's Opus, designed with a free hand to give the same, backswept front screen look as the Maxim. This 25-seat vehicle will be the only bodywork available on 59.12 for the next year, and the first 20 will be stock vehicles for the AW

#### Never mind the outside, feel the width - Waterman

ciate the difference," advises AVE Berkhof's David Waterman when asked what operators thought about the benefits of the extra five centimetres in the width of the new Berkhof Radial coach body.

Launched at Coach & Bus 97, Radial signals a radical departure for the coach industry.

Taking the opportunity to design in rollover strength and at the same time building to the new dimensions has given the Berkhof body a full seven centimetres extra width on the inside. Five centimetres from the new legal size and two centimetres out of the frame.

First Radial is for The Londoners and is built on Dennis Javelin 245 chassis. It is 3.3 metres high and has 53 seats, costs £133,000 and is representative of the target day-trip marwill be built on the same chassis but Volvo B10M could also be available.

It compares with the normal 2.5metre wide Axial which has 3.55metre high bodywork, making it suitable for toilet/TV/video-type operation. A 53-seat Axial on Javelin GX costs £141,000.

Meanwhile, the AVE Berkhof dealership is preparing for a move to larger premises in Basingstoke before the end of this month. The 1.1-acre premises give the company 18,000 sq ft accommodation for workshop and showroom.

It's on a small industrial estate and significantly increases the dealership's storage capacity. When Mr Waterman took over sales at the Q Driveowned business, sales of new Berkhof coaches were six a year. Now, seven years later, it has sold 91.



New dimension in coach travel: Berkhof Radial is 2.55 metres wide

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Plaxton wants to hear operators' opinions

President takes buses into the next century...

#### By Mike Morgan

"WHAT'S underneath it?" That was the burning question on the Plaxton stand as visitors to Coach & Bus 97 tried to fathom the mechanics of the red lowfloor double decker from sister company, Northern Counties. It is the first 2.55-metre wide bus in the UK.

A strong candidate for star of the show, the 'President' is based on an as-yet unlaunched Volvo lowfloor chassis. All we know about that is that the vertical Volvo engine is installed in line with the chassis and offset at the rear nearside corner driving down the nearside into a drop-centre rear axle. Front suspension is independent, giving a lowfloor as far as the rear axle where there is one step up to the rear.

What we do know about the finished vehicle, is that it is different. The show vehicle had two doors and a central, straight up and down staircase, which helps safety but robs the top floor of two seats. Nonetheless, there is still room for 47 seats upstairs and 23 down.

And it is inside where the President really shows up as different. The use of colour - a sort of watered-down turquoise - and modern laminates moves Plaxton firmly into the bus avant garde. An additional nice touch is that the driver's cab is air conditioned. Most of all the President is very spacious, taking full advantage of the extra 5cm now allowed by legislation. The forward ascending safety staircase leads to a top deck which clearly demonstrates the virtues of the wide body, which can accommodate 900mm double seats yet allow wide gangway.

Although clearly based on a potential replacement for the long-running Olympian, Volvo Bus managing director, Mike Ball was keeping details close to his chest. "It's a concept vehicle," he said. "We want to see and hear what people have to say."

However, Plaxton sales and marketing director, David Quainton, confirmed that the stylish new 10.5-metre body IS on a working chassis AND it will be on the streets of London in four around weeks for evaluation.

In style the President takes the humble double decker into the next century, making its predecessor, the Northern Counties Palatine, look decidedly dated.



Presidential style: a concept vehicle inside and out

## ...as Pointer grows to challenge the heavies

WHILE the futuristic President lowfloor decker was stealing the limelight on Plaxton's stand at Coach & Bus '97, firm orders were being written for two other new Plaxton products on the first morning of the show.

By noon on day one, six new Super Pointer Dart service buses and five new Cheetah minicoaches had been snapped up.

Jointly developed by Den-

nis and Plaxton, the Super Pointer Dart (SPD) is being marketed as 'Britain's most cost-effective urban bus.' The 11.3-metre SPD can carry up to 64 passengers - 41 of them seated - and, according to Plaxton's David Quainton, is £10,000 cheaper than a comparable 12-metre lowfloor vehicle. In show spec, that means a price tag of £97,000.

The SPD is some two

SPD SPD

Making a point: 'Britain's most cost-effective urban bus'

tonnes lighter than its fullsized equivalents and Mr Quainton claims fuel economy is up to 30% better than heavyweight types: "With fuel costs rising, Dennis and ourselves decided to maximise the benefits of the Dart chassis and Pointer body. The result of this collaboration is a vehicle which is immensely strong without being unduly heavy, as both companies have worked together to create an integrated structure."

Most of the SPD's seats - 24 - are in the step-free front section, with the remaining 17 being reached by one single shallow step ahead of the rear axle. 19.5-inch wheels minimise wheelarch intrusion, allowing a wide gangway.

Ínside, the SPD on display was a revelation. Cove panels incorporate new lighting units from Invertec. This, combined with tasteful use of modern laminates, bright pink colours and elegantly curved handrails, moves the SPD up into Continental standards of bus interior design. This being Britain, though, the seats are still covered in moquette - albeit a very tasteful one.

The new Cheetah minicoach also marks a quantum leap in design terms for Plaxton. This good-looking new small coach replaces the tiring Beaver and, at £75,000 to a high show spec, should give operators looking for a small vehicle that looks the part a new option. Its flat floor, with no wheelarch intrusion, will also go a long way to answering another of the major criticisms of many small coaches: lack of legroom in the seats over the rear wheels.

"The Cheetah builds on the strengths of the Beaver, which has been one of Britain's most enduring small coach designs," said Rick Betton, the man responsible for Plaxton's small coach sales. "It offers significant benefits including bigger seats, a flat floor, an improved entrance and - not least - a stylish new look which underlines the fact that it is a true luxury coach."

Unlike the Beaver, the Cheetah will be built at Plaxton's Scarborough plant and is based exclusively on Mercedes' 8.5-metre Vario chassis. A new GRP bonnet helps its good looks and gives easy access to the engine bay. Two side lockers and a rear boot should ensure enough luggage room.

Inside, the Cheetah has full width 900mm seats: operators will have a choice of either 33 or 29 with increased leg room and larger boot.

Production of the Cheetah starts towards the end of this year, with delivery available in time for the 1998 season.



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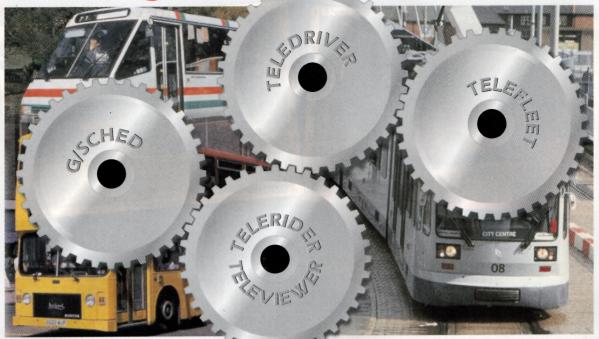


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Dennis' lowfloor decker on the drawing board breaks fresh ground as....

# **Stagecoach orders hundred Tridents**

#### **By Mark Williams**

ALEXANDER is confirmed as the bodybuilder for no fewerthan 100 lowfloor Dennis Trident buses with a 2.55-metre wide body to be built for Stagecoach and due for delivery in

The vehicles follow London Transport Buses' announcement of basic specification for lowfloor 'deckers, and Stagecoach has worked hand in hand with LTB to set the pattern for the new-generation vehicles.

"We looked closely at the new generation of lowfloor double-deck chassis being developed by a number of manufacturers and felt that the Dennis chassis was the one which best suited our needs," said Barry Hinckley, a director of Stagecoach. The buses will be going to Stagecoach East London, with 66 to be delivered by February 1999.

The London Super Buses will be the first full-accessible double deckers to operate in Britain, says Dennis. The design is based almost entirely on its experience with lowfloor deckers in Hong Kong.

The chassis turns the Cummins engine - mounted in-line in the Hong Kong spec through 90 degrees across the engine bay, driving through a ZF gearbox to the nearside rear ZF portal axle. As a result, the rear overhang was much reduced on the show model, to just 2150 mm.

The bus will run on air suspension, using a four-bag system across the rear. The London specification will use Cummins' C-series engines of 220 to 245 bhp.



2.55-metre wide body lowfloor Dennis Trident is result of Stagecoach and LTB working together



Britain's safest driver: Dennis Watson (left) with cheque

#### **Watson wins safest PSV driver award**

MOIR LOCKHEAD, FirstBus chief executive, praised the contribution to road safety made by Britain's PSV drivers at a special presentation held on the Telma stand at Coach & Bus 97.

In his capacity as Confederation of Passenger Transport President, Mr Lockhead presented a cheque and certificate to Dennis Watson MBE of FirstBus subsidiary, Thamesway. Mr Watson won the industry's top safe driving award in recognition of his 42 years accident-free driving at the wheel of a bus.

Sponsored by Telma and CBW, the Safe Driver of the Year Award is presented each year as part of the ROSCO safety awards.

Mr Watson, who was honoured with an MBE last year for his contribution to road passenger transport, is due to retire next March and has been married for 41 of those

Mr Lockhead said: "Mr Watson's record is a real measure of the safe carriage of people on coaches and buses and evidence that there are very few accidents."





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Optare pulls in coach orders for its two stylish show newcomers

# Small but beautifully formed

#### By Mark Barton

TWO SMALL but significant coaches not seen before the show pulled in operators to the Optare stand at Coach & Bus 97. Orders have been received for both

According to group managing director, Russell Richardson, Optare now has firm commitments on the first 20 Solera luxury midicoaches and the Autobus Nouvelle 2 on display was in the colours of D & I Dickinson of Boston.

The 35-seat Solera, coachbuilt by Ferqui in Spain to Optare's specification, fills a gap in Optare's coach range - neatly bridg-ing the gap between its Autobus subsidiary and full-size Bova coach distributorship: It's a gap that many coach operators themselves had identified in the market as a whole.

Spanish for "highest quality," the Solera certainly looks the part. Styling is attractive and build quality, as you come to expect from Spain nowadays, is good. Useful features include a cavernous boot and side lockers, which between them give 4.5 cubic metres of luggage

Underneath it all is the front-engined Mercedes 0.1120L chassis and the famous three pointed star is prominently displayed on both front and rear. Power is from Mercedes own 211 bhp six-cylinder Euro 2 engine driving through a six-speed manual gearbox.

And the cost of all this? Well, in standard 9.2 metre form - 35 Fainsa recliners, forced-air ventilation - Solera is priced at an almost modest £89,975 retail. Air conditioning will add another £5,000.

It is being sold directly by both Optare CoachSales and Autobus, from its soon-to-open Rotherham base. Solera is also available from the three established Autobus dealers - Connaught PSV of Doncaster, Carriageways of Bedford and Mid West Bus and Coach Sales of Cheltenham. Stock vehicles will be available from the middle of next year.



Spanish for 'highest quality' the Solera has no trouble living up to its name

The Autobus Nouvelle 2 adds the only thing that was missing from the award-winning Nouvelle 1 - good looks. Optare's influence can clearly be seen in the more aerodynamic and eye catching front end, where the restyled lift up bonnet also gives full access for daily level checks.

Skirt levels have been

raised at the side, maximising locker height. Glazing is now side bonded - but only single glazing to save weight - instead of plant-on aluminium frames. The entrance door has also been restyled with an alloy, rather than steel frame, and car-type handles and locks. Inside is virtually the same as Nouvelle 1, but the deep,

single piece windscreen now allows for a useful access panel at the top of the dashboard.

Holding it all up is Mercedes' Vario chassis with a four cylinder turbocharged and intercooled 136bhp engine. This allows up to 33 seats to be fitted unlike the show vehicle for D & J Dickinson.

# 115 orders for Optare Solo

OPTARE'S radical Solo the lowfloor midibus withsteering axle ahead of the entrance - not only attracted favourable comment at last week's Coach & Bus 97 but is supported by £9 million of orders made before the show opened.

Managing director, Russell Richardson, confirmed that Wilts & Dorset signed up for 85 as MetroRider replacements and Travel West Midlands has 30 on order as part of its 200vehicle lowfloor replacement programme.

Consequently production, which is due to start at the Crossgates factory in the New Year, is now booked up until the end of have the same seating August.

£65,000 rear-The engined bus with steer axle ahead of the entrance has proved an instant hit with show visitors, with the 8.5metre version with up to 24 seats in the lowfloor section being probably the most popular.

The Solo sets a whole new series of firsts in the industry says Mr Richardson: "It is the:

- First lowfloor bus with a 250 mm entry step without kneeling
- First bus of its size with a full-width body and available in lengths of 8.5 and 9.2 metre
- First lowfloor bus to

capacity as a standard floor height vehicle of the same length

- First UK bus to have a complete multiplexed electrical system (promising major improvements in reliability and fault diag-
- First UK integral bus of this size with an advanced Mercedes-Benz engine
- First bus of this size which fully meets the known requirements of the forthcoming application of the Disability Discrimination Act to buses."

Wilts & Dorset operations director, Andrew Bryce, said: "We asked ourselves why we should



Going Solo: orders even before Coach & Bus 97 opened

expect our passengers to suffer lower standards of ride comfort, accessibility and space just because they happened to be travelling on smaller vehicles compared with the full-sized buses in our fleet.

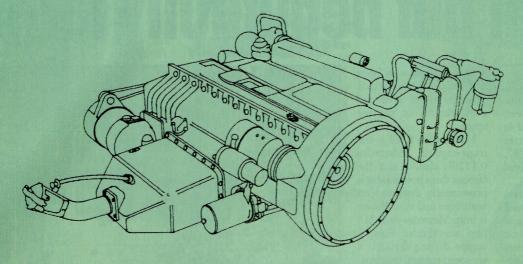
"We are delighted that our input has helped Optare refine its design which is completely without compromise in all of these areas and which genuinely leads the industry by setting new standards."

All of Wilts & Dorset's Solos will be fitted with an optional wheelchair ramp and wheelchair space.



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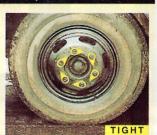
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#### **TOUR NEWS: UK & EUROPE**

Port of Dover sponsors new driver's award

# Vital role of man in the hot seat



#### By William Golden

THE VITAL ROLE played by the coach driver in the success of any tour has been underlined by the Port of Dover's decision to sponsor a new award, Continental Coach Driver of the Year, at the 1998 Coach Industry Awards.

Michael Krayenbrink, general manager (ferries) for Dover Harbour Board, said: "We are keen to promote best practice through our port operations and this can only be achieved through the commitment and enthusiasm of everyone.

"The coach driver has a key role in ensuring passengers have an enjoyable travelling experience, one that goes far beyond the issues of knowing the route and negotiating it efficiently and safely."



Driving force: Dover has the largest share of the cross-Channel coach market

Dover Harbour Board has invested more than £500,000 in new, coach-

related traffic management and facilities in the past 12 months. As a result, the

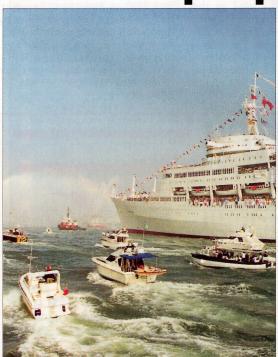
port is frequently delivering transit times from ship to open road in under five minutes. Mr Krayenbrink added: "Dover remains the premier cross-Channel terminal for Continental coach operators, with a market share of more than 70 per cent.

"Our sponsorship of this award is further evidence of our commitment to support the coach industry.'

 The 1998 Coach Industry Awards will be held on Friday 23 January at the Stakis Birmingham Metropole Hotel. Tickets are £800 plus VAT for a table of ten or £85 plus VAT each. Special hotel rates are available for those wishing to stay overnight at the Metropole.

More details from Kate Dalton, Evention, 5 Fenlake Business Park, Fengate, Peterborough PE1 5QB, tel 01733 311599 (fax 01733 343310).

# Cruise ship trip results in a full cargo



CHAMPAGNE corks popped as 200 people boarded four Woods Travel coaches to journey to Southampton to say farewell to the cruise ship Canberra.

Sales exceeded all expectations and the Bognor Regis operator chartered a private vessel, the Solent Scene, for the group. This joined the flotilla of hundreds of other vessels

that escorted the Canberra back up Southampton Water as she berthed for the last time. Lunch was served on board and the cruise was followed by a tour of the

On the return journey, the passengers held a raffle and raised £214 for St Wilfred's Hospice, Chichester.



The long goodbye: a farewell coach excursion to see the cruise ship Canberra (left) exceeded all expectations for Woods Travel (right)

#### **Guarantee** for groups

A NEW Customer Service Guarantee is included in the 1998 Coach and Group Guide from Stena Line, which is enjoying a marked increase in coach business thanks to the introduction of HSS fast ferries on three routes.

The guarantee outlines the company's commitment to delivering the highest levels of service to coach and group opera-David Stamp, tors. national sales manager, said: "There is greater confidence in the coach market than 12 months ago, with better exchange rates and a more positive consumer feel to taking a holiday.

"Stena Line has seen a growth in its coach business in 1997, notably through the increasing popularity of the Stena HSS. Overall, the coach tourism market to Ireland has shown steady growth this year, while the shortsea business to France has remained fairly static year on year.'

The HSS is the world's largest high-speed ferry and Stena Line operates three craft on its Holyhead to Dun Laoghaire, Stranraer to Belfast and Harwich to Hook of Holland routes.

For bookings and more information about 1998 group rates, contact Stena Line coach and group reservations on 0990 204402.

Ireland specialist and Stena Line renew links for 1998 season

# A piece of the Action

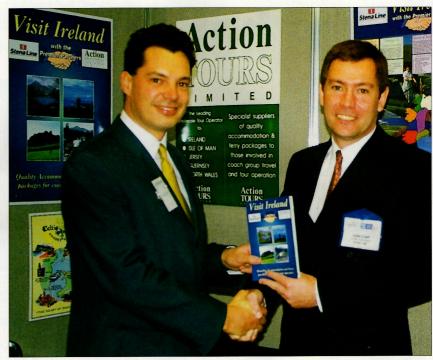
#### **By William Golden**

A MARKED growth in business this year has led Action Tours, the Shropshire wholesaler, to launch an expanded range of packages to coach operators in 1998.

The Ireland specialist has renewed its Premier Partnership with Stena Line to offer coach operators a wide range of tours to the whole of Ireland in 1998. The Visit Ireland brochure features suggested itineraries, price guides to hotels and details of places to visit.

Action Tours is backing up the Ireland programme with tours and packages to the Channel Islands, the Isle of Man, the Scottish Isles and North Wales.

 More information and copies of the brochures are available from Action Tours, 5 Park Street, Shifnal, Shropshire, TF11 9BA, tel 01952 462462 (fax 01952 462555).



Hands across the water: Steve Goodenough (left), md of Action Tours, and David Stamp, Stena Line's national sales manager, renew the partnership

# **Botel's North Sea partners**

TOURS to Bruges and Amsterdam and Christmas markets are featured in a new brochure from Botel Services and P&O North Sea Ferries.

The Rotherham wholesaler has been appointed Preferred Wholesaler for 1998 by the Hull-based ferry operator and is offering operators a range of holiday options. Tours can be arranged on a four or five-day basis, comprising two nights on board ship and one or two nights in a hotel. All prices are based on inside special cabins and the rates depend on departure

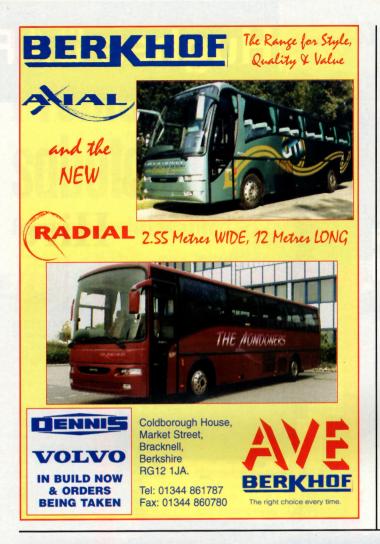
Highlights of the programme are Traditional Holland, based in the Golden Tulip Hotel, Purmerend, and Champagne, Lace and Luxury Chocolates in Bruges and Gent. The success of the 1997 Christmas Markets programme has led Botel to expand its 1998 range of accommodation. Tours can now be based in the Belgian towns of Hasselt or Liege; the German cities of Cologne and Aachen; or the German Rhine Valley.

P&O North Sea Ferries operates from Hull to Rotterdam (Europort) and Zeebrugge and group evening meals and breakfasts may be booked.

For more details contact Botel Services on 01709 703535 (fax 01709 703525), or ring its Manchester office on 0161 428 7333 (fax 0161 428



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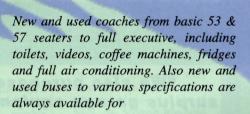
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# Problems were caused by sabotage, operator claims

#### Ex driver who wanted to buy his own bus blamed



SABOTAGE was cited as the reason maintenance problems encountered by a coach MAINTENANCE Operation.

Leeds disciplinary operation. At a

inquiry, Fairclough Bros Ltd, trading as Tatlocks For Travel, of 44 Stand Radcliffe, Manchester, appeared before North Western deputy traffic commissioner Patrick Mulvenna.

In addition to considering taking disciplinary action against the company, the deputy commissioner also had before him an application to increase its O-licence authorisation from four to five vehicles.

DoT vehicle examiner Ivan Coup said he had carried out a maintenance investigation in May following a tip-off from the police. The condition of the two vehicles he examined was very poor.

They were both issued with immediate prohibitions for defects of a very serious nature. A prosecution was pending in relation to one of the vehicles over a defective tyre.

The inspection records were very poorly made out. Inspections were carried out by director Frank Howarth and the defects found showed he was not competent to carry out that task. Of 11 prohibition notices issued to the company's vehicles since 1992, 10 could be classed as maintenance related.

For the company, John Backhouse said the maintenance of the vehicles was now being contracted out to a commercial garage. Mr Coup said the garage was using goods vehicle inspection forms rather than PSVtype ones but Mr Howarth said he would ensure the garage was given the right forms.

So far the garage had inspected four vehicles. The company had five vehicles, one of which was currently off the road. When Mr Coup also pointed out the inspection forms had not been signed off by the garage as showing the vehicles were fit for service, Mr Howarth said that was because they carried out all but major repairs themselves.

In future vehicles would be resubmitted to the garage after defects had been rectified so the work could be checked over.

Mr Howarth said that, though he

had no mechanical qualifications, he had considerable experience of PSV maintenance.

There had been no problems since the trouble they had had with the Ministry in 1993 until a week before the maintenance investigation by the vehicle examiner.

They then had problems with coaches being sabotaged and that had been reported to Greater Manchester Police. A handbrake cable had been cut, as had a gear lever, batteries had been smashed and an O-licence identity disc had been

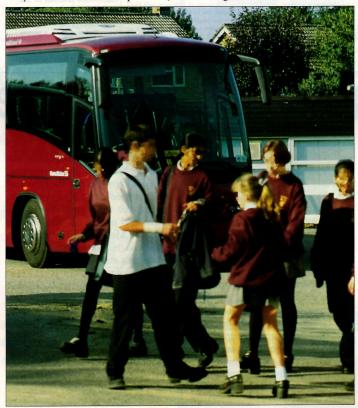
He had a good idea who had reported them to the police but he could not prove it, said Mr Howarth. He'd had a driver who had wanted to buy a bus and run it on his licence. When he refused to do so, things started to happen to the company's vehicles. He had got rid of the driver who had caused the

Questioned about the driver defect reporting system, Mr Howarth said drivers reported defects to him verbally if he was on the premises,

rather than reporting them in writing. Asked about a cheque in payment of vehicle excise duty that had been dishonoured. Mr Howarth said the lady in the office had failed to transfer sufficient funds over. He was seeking to increase the authorisation on the licence because he was currently having to give work away, Mr Howarth said.

The company had a contract with the King David School at Cheetham Hill which had grown from one to four vehicles. There was a second school contract and the company also carried sixth-form students for North West Utilities to Chorley.

In addition, they normally had one vehicle away on tour at any one time. Adjourning the proceedings until a date to be fixed after hearing financial evidence in private at the company's request, Mr Mulvenna said he required more recent accounts to satisfy him the company had sufficient financial resources. He also wished to take account of the result of the pending prosecution in relation to the defective tyre before reaching a decision.



Tatlocks for Travel had won a second school contract

#### Phillips - ban and revocation



based Phillips Coaches Ltd had it licence revoked, and its directors were banned from holding or obtaining an O-

licence, when the company failed to appear at a Cardiff disciplinary inquiry.

South Wales traffic commissioner John Mervyn Pugh said the company, of 1 Rheola Street, Penrhiwceiber, Mountain Ash, Mid Glamorgan, had been granted a licence in June 1993 authorising the operation of five double deckers, eight single deckers and two minibuses.

The directors of the company, Graham Phillips, David Phillips, Miriam Phillips and Norma Lewis, had given false information when the company first applied for a licence, said the commissioner. He said information had come to his attention through Clayton Jones, of Ynysybwl, who had indicated that Phillips Coaches had never traded as an entity.

"They should never have been given the authority of a licence," said Mr Pugh. "It is nothing short of a disgrace and it should be revoked with immediate effect."

The commissioner also directed that any application for a licence by the company's nominated transport manager, Meirion Phillips, should be heard at a public inquiry.

#### Perrins escapes with a warning



COACH OPERA-TOR John Perrins escaped with a warning about his future maintenance standards at a Leeds disciplinary inquiry.

Mr Perrins, who trades as John Richard Tours, of 20 Bourne Close, Brimington, Chesterfield, Derbyshire, had been called before North Western deputy traffic commissioner Patrick Mulvenna following the issue of four prohibition notices.

All the prohibition notices had related to the same vehicle, which he had now disposed of, said Mr Perrins. He had also since changed his maintenance contractor.

Though the prohibition notices gave him grounds for taking disciplinary action, in the circumstances, he would issee a formal warning, said Mr Mulvenna.

# Partners' have O-licence revoked and are banned for six months



TION had its Olicence revoked with immediate effect, and its partners were banned from holding or obtaining one

for six months, when the company appeared at a Cardiff disciplinary inquiry for the second time within four months.

Graham and Carol Colwill, trading as Colwill Coaches, of Village Garage, Station Road, Penclawdd, Swansea, Mid Glamorgan, had been called before South Wales traffic commissioner John Mervyn Pugh because of continuing concern over their maintenance standards.

In May the commissioner reduced the firm's O-licence authorisation from 15 to 10 vehicles, warning that the VI would be carrying out further visits to check its maintenance system was being operated properly and its vehicles were being kept in a fit and roadworthy condition (CBW, 31 May).

The commissioner was told further prohibitions had since been placed on the firm's vehicles. In one case a coach had the boot secured with broken broom handles and another vehicle, which was carrying adult passengers, had a seat without cushions.

There had also been an instance of a coach emitting excessive smoke

#### No second chances - commissioner

when on full throttle. Mr Colwill said the rear lights had failed on the coach with the defective boot lid. Normally the boot was screwed down with plates but it had not been secured when the bulbs were replaced. There had been no danger to the passengers as there was no access to the boot by the public. Referring to the missing seat, Mr Colwill said the driver had inspected the vehicle concerned at his home and not at the firm's garage.

As he had only been picking up 12 adults with an 18-seater vehicle he had not thought it was a problem. The driver concerned had been strongly censured.

Revoking the licence, and imposing the disqualification order, Mr Pugh said the prohibition placed on the vehicle with the defective boot lid had been "horrendous reading." There was excessive corrosion of the boot lid, which was being held down by broom handles supported by twisted wire. The flooring was detached and oil and water were present. It was not capable of carrying luggage. The commissioner said the

firm had been warned at the previous public inquiry over its poor maintenance standards and that the licence would be revoked if there were any further prohibitions showing a significant failure of maintenance. The commissioner was asked to defer the implementation of his decision, on the grounds there had been a tremendous improvement. It was pointed out there were now fewer coaches and it was suggested the quality of the staff, who were under constant supervision, was undoubtedly improving.

Rejecting that request, Mr Pugh said there were no second chances. He had thought on the last occasion Mr Colwill had learned his lesson. It gave him no pleasure to take such drastic action but it was abundantly clear Mr Colwill was incapable of adhering to a proper maintenance system. He had allowed him to continue on the last occasion as he was always kind and considerate to operators, giving them an opportunity to

Most operators took advantage of such an opportunity and he did not see them again. However, Mr Colwill had failed him.

put matters right and continue.

The disqualification period of six months was less than the normal period, said Mr Pugh. It was clear Mr Colwill knew what his failings were and he did not consider he was a "rogue" operator.

# coach GMBS

ses Manchester op can run reduced by 30

#### by Michael Jewell

and very few had been correctly and very few had been correctly completed. Greater supervision of the workshop staff was required to ensure defective buses did not go back on the road.

Mr Warnford said Stage-

coach had acquired the company in February 1996. The buses had been in a very poor and dirty con-dition when the business was ac-quired and it was evident the main-tenance system was ineffective.

matters are improving, quite the reverse," said the commissioner. He pointed out the maintenance invespointed out the maintenance investigations were carried out almost a year after Stagecoach had taken over, and 17 buses were given prohibition notices for immediately dangerous defects.

Engineering director Peter Engineering director Peter Sumner, who was appointed at the beginning of February, said GMB staff had been slow to realise there was a problem but that realisation was there now. The company's so-licitor, John Backhouse, main-



'ACTS of sabotage' by former employees caused some of the maintenance problems he had experienced, an operator told South Wales traffic commission-rolon Mervyn Pugh.

Graham Colwill, a partner

FLASHBACK: In May commissioner reduced the firm's authorisation



DE LUXE COACH SERVICES was given a serious warning about its maintenance standards by West Midland traffic commissioner John

Mervyn Pugh at a Birmingham disciplinary inquiry.

The commissioner also cut the authorisation on the O-licence held by the company, of 49 Long Street, Atherstone, from nine vehicles to the eight it is currently operating.

The commissioner pointed out the company's O-licence was in jeopardy following the issue of three prohibition notices endorsed as showing a significant maintenance failure.

Director Andrew Evans said they thought they had the right maintenance system but they had not been operating it correctly. It had been agreed the vehicles would be inspected every six weeks but, at the time of the vehicle examiner's visit, it was obvious they had not been inspected in the previous six weeks and, having looked through the records, it was clear that, in the last four months, the six-week period had not been adhered to.

They had now instituted a policy of inspections every four weeks, said Mr Evans, using a wall chart to indicate when the next inspection was due. They had a drivers' nil daily defect reporting system using duplicate books in place and they had recently re-issued contracts of employment to their drivers which pointed out their responsibilities.

Mr Pugh said he required the company to also send letters to its drivers and its one fitter, pointing out their responsibilities, with them signing a copy to say they had read and understood them.

He suggested the company use triplicate books for defect reporting, with one copy going to the fitter and the other landing on Mr Evans' desk. In reply to the commissioner, Mr Evans said not all the vehicles had had fresh MoT tests. Three vehicles had been tested since the vehicle examiner's visit and one was being tested that day. The oldest vehicle in the fleet was about to be taken out of service and replaced.

Mr Evans undertook to have all the company's vehicles go through fresh MoT tests within nine days, apart from the one being tested that day and Mr Pugh said that enabled him not to have to suspend the

He could see what had happened, the company had been relying too much upon its employees. Director Richard Evans said they now carried out regular checks to ensure the system was working properly.

Mr Pugh warned that, if the company collected any more 'S' marked prohibitions it was likely to have its licence revoked.

He said that, as the company had held a licence since 1981, the directors had never been to a new operator's seminar and he thought it would be beneficial for them to attend one. They seemed to be acting very responsibly, he said.

Both directors agreed being called to public inquiry had been a nasty shock and Mr Pugh said if the court room had been full of parents of the children the company was carrying on its school runs, the parents probably would not have let their children travel with the company again.

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# Make your views known

IME IS RUNNING OUT for making comments on the Government's consultation document Developing an Integrated Transport Policy. Observations have to be submitted by 14 November - only four weeks away. Readers who want to be involved in determining the shape of their future working environment would do well to study this 16-page booklet and make suitable response. Copies are freely available from Ruth Chapman, Integrated Transport Division 1, Department of the Environment, Transport & the Regions, Zone 1/26, Great Minster House, 76 Marsham Street, London SW1P 4DR (0171 271 5631).

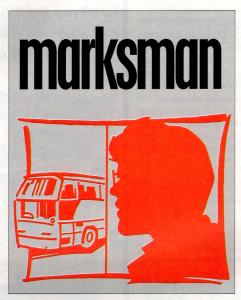
In that context, I return to an earlier comment I made about the conduct and demeanour of some bus passengers being offensive to others. Since I wrote that I have noticed several letters in national newspapers following the same theme. In particular one from a lady who had been persuaded to try public transport as an alternative to the car, but who was so perturbed by the language and conduct of a group of yobs travelling on the bus - and in particular subjecting her six year old to words and actions wholly alien to the child's upbringing - that she declared 'never again'.

The Government clearly does recognise this problem, for launching an experimental telephone helpline, ('SAFEline') for passengers in Sheffield to report threatening or criminal behaviour on buses, Transport Minister Glenda Jackson said: "Unfortunately, fear of crime keeps people off public transport - especially women. It means that many people who might use public transport travel by car instead, increasing congestion and pollution."

Allied to this I have also seen several press reports about 'zero tolerance' by airlines of unacceptable conduct by passengers. They cannot put such passengers off but they can, and do, handcuff them to their seats to limit their ability to upset other travellers.

I am firmly coming to the view that, whatever the immediate cost to our industry may be, there will be a long-term benefit if we also had a zero tolerance to unbecoming conduct of passengers. If we do this, the use of public transport may well be boosted beyond our wildest dreams by the Government's determination to reduce car dependency but, if we continue to bury our heads in the sand to the behaviour of louts and hooligans, all we can

Only four weeks left for observations on the Government's consultation document to be submitted



expect from a change in transport policy is a multitude of potential new passengers who try it once and are so affronted that they too join the 'never-

In relation to the consultation paper it may mean that changes in legislation are needed to strengthen the minimal powers in the 'Conduct' regulations to evict an offending passenger from a PSV. For instance, to allow the use of reasonable force to achieve this. It might also be thought that simply making an offending passenger alight is an inadequate sanction and that a specific and punishable offence of behaving in an offensive manner on a PSV should be created.

On busy urban routes where large vehicles are used, enforcing a zero tolerance policy would mean the return of the conductor. All my information tells me that this would be welcomed by the majority of passengers. Apart from weighing up the short-term cost against the long-term benefits, even the immediate cost might not be as great as appears at first sight. Although there is now a lot of off-bus ticketing, it is indisputable that passengers would board far quicker if drivers had no responsibility for fare collection or ticket and pass inspection. This translates into a faster through journey time (welcomed by passengers and thus likely to be generative) and better vehicle utilisation. If re-scheduling as a result of using conductors resulted in only nine vehicles being needed to do what 10 did with one-person operation (which may well be possible), the savings would go a long way to offset the conductors' wage costs.

In terms of the Government's consultation, reducing traffic delays caused by fare collection on OPO buses, would give enormous benefits. Playing Devil's Advocate: if I were a local authority discussing a quality partnership deal with a bus operator, one of the quid pro quos that I would seek for bus-priority measures over some parts of a route would be to have conductors over the rest. Why should we expect favourable facilities to speed journey time at the expense of other road users if we are not prepared to do things within our power to speed the journey times of our own vehicles and following traffic?

Commercial realism (possibly misplaced and short-sighted) is, of course, the reason why operators have not returned to services with conductors in 10+ years of deregulation. It may, then, be the opportune moment for the Government to create the level playing field by legislating for conductors on services running in urban areas - and possibly even offer some grant aid for a transitional period towards the cost. This could work roughly in the same way as the Rural Bus Grant did in the first years of deregulation. Then 'rural' was determined by population size of urban area and the grant was paid on route length run supplemental to fuel duty rebate. The actual rate declined year on year until it was phased out. Although some may see this as a slightly heretical view, I am convinced that a return to conductors on urban services will be good for the industry, for other road users, for passengers, and to achieve the Government's own

#### Magnificent Seven': judge's decision is outrageous

AS READERS WILL REMEMBER, I do not believe in paying abnormally low wages to drivers. Press reports suggest that the evidence about the wages paid to drivers of Shamrock Coaches was at best misrepresented, or possibly concealed or distorted, in Cardiff Crown Court.

In the case to which I refer seven drivers who had systematically and skilfully plundered £36,756 from the fare-boxes of Shamrock Coaches to make up for what they saw as less than a living wage, faced a sympa-

He imposed community service orders, but allowed them to keep the money - some £5,000 each, saying: "This is an exceptional case. You each have a sense of grievance against your former employer over unpaid wages.'

I understand that Shamrock may be appealing and wish it every success. This is a monstrous decision, whatever the facts about low or unpaid wages. Indeed, I find it amazing that Judge Evans even thought it necessary to consider wages at all.

At best I would have thought any paucity or shortfall of wages could only be advanced in mitigation. I do not know the charges brought

against this so called "Magnificent Seven" but the simple fact must surely be that, whatever the cause, reason, or justification, they used duplicate ticket machines to steal money properly belonging to their employer.

Section 1(1) of the Theft Act 1968 provides that a person is guilty of theft if he dishonestly appropriates property belonging to another with the intention of permanently depriving the other of it.

That seems pretty plain to me and it would appear that the judge may have taken in to account factors over and above what was properly necessary to apply that simple test. If drivers feel wrongly treated by employers they have recourse to lawful remedies, ranging from industrial tribunals to striking, or serving notice.

Theft apart, there is also the issue of loyalty to one's employer and the implied duty on employees to best serve the employer's business.

Traditionally the law has been particularly severe on those who breach positions of financial trust arising from employment. Dipping one's hand into the till is not a lawful remedy for employment grievances and it is outrageous that a decision of a court should suggest otherwise.

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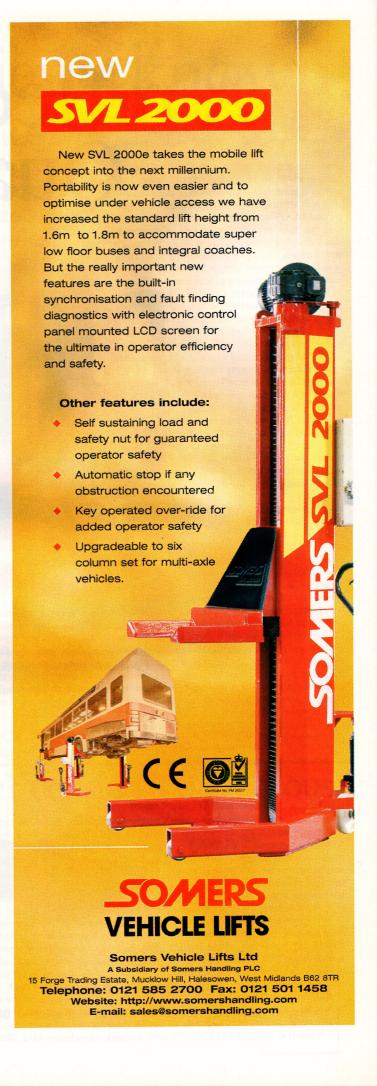
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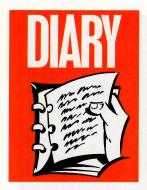
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Trolley good: Massey Bros-bodied Leyland TB10 trolleybus was demonstrated over the South Lancashire Transport system around February 1935 and eventually registered TJ9010 but never found a buyer and was broken up



#### **BYGONE DAYS**

#### Shedding light on 'lowfloor' trolleybus

ONCE again, a large number of readers have shed some light on the line drawing of a Leyland lowfloor trolleybus (*Coach and Bus Week*, 2 October).

It existed as much more than just a concept, as this picture shows. We were right in our belief that the drawing pre-dated the 1950s; the TB10 with its Massey Bros body was first seen in 1934, and run on test on South Lancashire Transport's system in 1935.

In the final analysis, we were most entertained by Roy Marshall's letter, and the accompanying photograph printed here. For this reason we have sent the *Coach and Bus Week* mug to him. Thanks to everyone who wrote whose letters have not been printed.

Rather than precis the many words we received on the subject, we'll simply let our selection of readers speak for themselves:

IN RESPONSE to the question about the Leyland 'TB10' lowfloor trolleybus, I can refer you to two sources on the subject:
I) Doug Jack's book *The Leyland Bus*, pages 138/9 (TPC 1977), and *British Trolleybuses* 1911-1972, page 91, Geoff Lumb (Ian Allan 1995).

This 1934 product was a true lowfloor vehicle with the chassis cross members and axles being drop-centre. Two traction motors were provided, left and

right, mounted outside the chassis mainframes - somewhat like double-sided AEC Q-type (of which there was also a trolleybus version, the Model 761T (KY-6210) of 1939.

Contemporary literature variously described this Leyland as 'low loading', 'low-entrance' and 'low floor'. The designation TB10 is questionable as three-axle Leyland trolleybuses were TTB while those with two axles were TB. Doug Jack, who researches Leyland archives, refers to the lowfloor as TTL, which seems logical as 'three-axle trolleybus - lowfloor'. The much respected Geoff Lumb, however, refers to the TB10. MIKE DAVIS DTS Publishing Croydon Surrey

I NOTED with interest the drawing of the Leyland 'lowfloor' trolleybus was new in 1935 and was exhibited on the General Electric Company stand at the 1935 Commercial Motor Show.

The Massey body had staircases at the front and rear and the floor was level with the platforms as on the Bristol Lodekka. This was achieved by having two traction motors, one on each side of the vehicle each driving its own transmission shaft to the dropped centre rear axles. The transmission shafts were

situated outside the chassis

It was demonstrated to a number of operators but, surprisingly, did not catch on and was not developed. It is thought it was eventually dismantled. HARRY POSTLETHWAITE Little Bispham Blackpool Lancs

THE MASSEY Bros-bodied Leyland TB10 trolleybus was demonstrated over the South Lancashire Transport system around February 1935. It was eventually registered TJ9010 but never found a buyer and was broken up. Apparently, it did not have a low floor (see the height of the lower deck in my picture) and must have had inward-facing seats over the wheel arches.

Norman Massey recounted to me several years ago that, when it was built with the trolley gantry in place, it was too high to go through the workshop door so the floor of the building had to be scooped out to allow more room.

It appears to have been based on a previous bus of this type - a Wycombe-bodied, Junkers-engined Gilford that caused a sensation at the October 1930 Olympian Show. It had a six-cylinder double-opposed piston engine driving the front wheels.

No buyer emerged, and it was converted into a trolleybus, for a short time operating for Wolverhampton Corporation. Even this was not a 'first', however. In 1926, Bartons of Chilwell, Notts, built a twin-engined lowfloor bus driven by two Ford T engines to the front wheels. It never entered service, the trade press at the time remarking that it appeared to have too little ground clearance!

ROY MARSHALL Burnley

The final word must go to Charles Marshall, who not only included a transcript of Doug Jack's writings on the subject, but threw down the gauntlet to us to challenge his mind more fully. Watch this space...

Lancs

THE DRAWING of the Leyland lowfloor trolleybus intrigued me. The vehicle is described by Doug Jack in his excellent book, *Leyland Bus*, published by Transport Publishing Company.

I have no doubt many of your readers share my view that your Bygone Days feature is full of interest and nostalgia but, if you are really going to test our memories and knowledge, you need to come up with pictures of some rather rarer and more exotic vehicles which have graced the history of the UK coach and bus industry. CHARLES S MARSHALL Bishop Auckland Co Durham

#### COACH AND BUS WEEK ENDING...

#### 10 YEARS AGO

- COTTERS Tour and Leisure Group crashes owing a reputed £2.5m and takes Caledonia Coach Sales with it. Wallace Arnold picks up Watsons Tours and Cotters Tours subsidiaries from the receiver and rescues some Cotters passengers from Belgium.
- Plaxton's unions agree to a three-year fixed pay deal, ending of restrictive practices, a limited nostrike agreement and single-union negotiations as new management sweeps through the company. "This is a breath of fresh air," said chief executive David Matthews.
- Labour MPs protest about the prospective sale of NBC's EMMS, Lincs Road Car and Midland Red North to Allied Bus Services - a company run from Gibraltar and Spain by expats, and led by haulage expert Peter Ball. (Coachmart, 23 Oct 1987)

#### 15 YEARS AGO

- Roborough House is being prepared to become the new Trathens HQ. The old manor house with nearby, new single-span workshop is to become maintenance facility, booking office and departure lounge all rolled into one.
- But in the legal section, Trathens gets a black mark for £6,000 in tacho fines, shared between Mike and David Trathen and 26 of the company's drivers. They plead guilty to 80 offences out of 43,000 tachograph records. Mike Trathen introduces a more efficient tacho check and retimes journeys at a cost of £156,000 a year.
- COACHMART'S reporter travels on Blueline's New-castle-London service aboard the then-new Setra 215HD, reporting a good ride and cheap coffee. The feature takes a long look at Ray Turner's expanding empire.

  (Coachmart, 22 Oct '82)



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The Editor, Coach and Bus Week, EMAP Automotive Ltd, Wentworth House, Wentworth Street, Peterborough PE1 1DS fax: 01733 467154 e-mail: FrankF@automotive.emap.co.uk

# Can anybody supply parts?

I operate a 1986 Bedford YNV Venturer and I am having great difficulty trying to find track rod ends for it. Could somebody help? The vehicle is serviceable at the moment but these parts will need to be replaced in the next few weeks as part of our preventative maintenance program. If I can be of any further assistance please do not hesitate to contact me. MIKE ROYDS

Proprietor MT Travel Whitworth Greater Manchester

# **Amazing how** policy changes

Isn't it amazing how a large manufacturer can change its policy over a period of 10 or so years?

At the time of Volvo's takeover of Leyland Bus, the struggling sales of Royal Tiger Doyen were brought to an end by the new owner's view that rear-engined coaches would not be built by themselves for a plethora of reasons, not least of which they were not considered to be safe because of the inherent weight distribution difficulties. This was why the C10M had been introduced (which was even more of a 'lemon' than the Tiger Doyen).

To be fair Royal Tiger had its own share of problems and not a particularly good name in the coaching world at the time but this was mainly due to the build methods and quality control. I consider that even today the styling would stand up in the marketplace among the new generation of vehicles available, in the same way as the Setra and Van Hool ranges have evolved and been updated.

Many Royal Tiger chassis and Doyen still live on and operate as second-line vehicles in smaller operators' fleets. But wait. A new concept from Volvo for the British market (or is it English now?) the B7R. Soon to be available with chassis cut version with a rear engine developing 260 bhp and with a ZF manual or auto transmission. Now where did they get that idea from?

As a development for the future I would suggest bodybuilders other

# **How to encourage public transport**

Encourage public transport? Simple, Mr Prescott, stop treating all road transport the same. You claim to support public transport, particularly buses and, at the same time, increase our fuel costs in a single year through two Budgets by 16%, while continuing the previous government's policy of not adjusting the fuel duty rebate for inflation. Who do you think you are kidding?

The coach and bus industry needs an immediate injection of enthusiasm from central Government to provide the public transport services that are going to be essential if we are to avoid total obliteration by the private car. The solution is simple, cost effective, and would promote environmental awareness. I suggest the following strategy be adopted immediately: 1. Scrap Fuel Duty Rebate 2. Allow all PSVs complying with

minimum Euro 1 Regulations, or with aftermarket catalysts, to run on red (untaxed) diesel. Make red (green) diesel environmentally friendly, with reduced sulphur content. The additional cost will be more than compensated by not

than Plaxton may wish to use the chassis even to the extent Volvo may wish to design their own. They could even call it a Royal Volvo Doyen. I await with bated breath more ideas from the big company. RICHARD WARNER Director

Warners Bus and Coach Tewkesbury

# **Leave drivers** just to drive

The recent concern over driver shortages, I believe, has been festering for many years and, as Marksman said last week, is obviously linked to wages and other related conditions.

My opinion on the causes are broadly in line with the comments published in CBW over recent months but the large tour operators do not help the situation as far as coach drivers are concerned. The household names in the industry still pay poor basic wages, yet purport to be the showpieces of the trade. They

3. In urban areas, where there is a bus route and two lanes are available, make the inside lane a bus lane. There is nothing like motorists seeing a bus travelling in its own lane while they are stuck in traffic to encourage people to give up their car and use public transport. The increased patronage would improve passenger revenue and consequently the need for subsidy - but please, local authorities, don't tell me you haven't the money to introduce bus lanes, lobby the Government to reduce the amount of needless bureaucracy required to paint a few lines and put signs up. It seems to cost twice as much as it should when you are involved, spending our money.

What would the above measures achieve? Firstly, older buses would be less cost effective to run and encourage operators to purchase new vehicles to the benefit of the travelling public and manufacturers, creating employment. It would reduce costs, enabling operators to spend less time on paperwork to forecast and claim back fuel duty

rebate, not to mention the teams of civil servants employed to carry out work which is entirely unnecessary. They would be better re-deployed elsewhere, although a degree of flexibility may be required.

There has been too much talk and not enough action. The continuing anti-bus measures from central Government are something that must be turned round quickly, before I, along with many other operators, withdraw large sections of the commercial bus network.

The importance of the coach and bus in the public transport infrastructure is already acknowledged. Put us on a par with the airline and rail industry, although they have dedicated roads.

With a small amount of help, I am confident we can achieve, largely commercially, the Government's alleged desire to see more people transferred to coach and bus services.

STEVE WHITEWAY Operations Director Epsom Coach and Bus Epsom Surrey

openly expect drivers to substantially supplement their income by selling optional tours, biscuits or any other commissioned-based goods. Consequently, if such practices

were withdrawn, the wage portion of any tour could be increased, and the clients who pay the wages in any case, would know where they stand when booking.

Only last week your magazine reported on THE major operator guaranteeing reduced prices for 1998. I wonder what percentage of drivers' wages will be built into this campaign?

Perhaps they should have the following paragraph in their Conditions of Booking:-

"Your tour price only covers 50% of your drivers' salary. He/she has our permission to sell other tours/goods to make up the differ-

The average customers think this is normal practice and what a pleasant surprise they have the first time they travel with me. They quickly learn that a higher tour price is better value in the long term, so wages can be calculated accordingly, and to a higher level.

Therefore, can I challenge these operators to set the trend for wages by stopping these practices, thus leaving the drivers JUST TO DRIVE. The smaller operators will soon follow. Also I am sure it will be reflected in other areas of tourism. I appreciate a free meal as much as anyone, but the offer of free gifts and vouchers has to be paid for by my passengers. ALAN PHILLIPS

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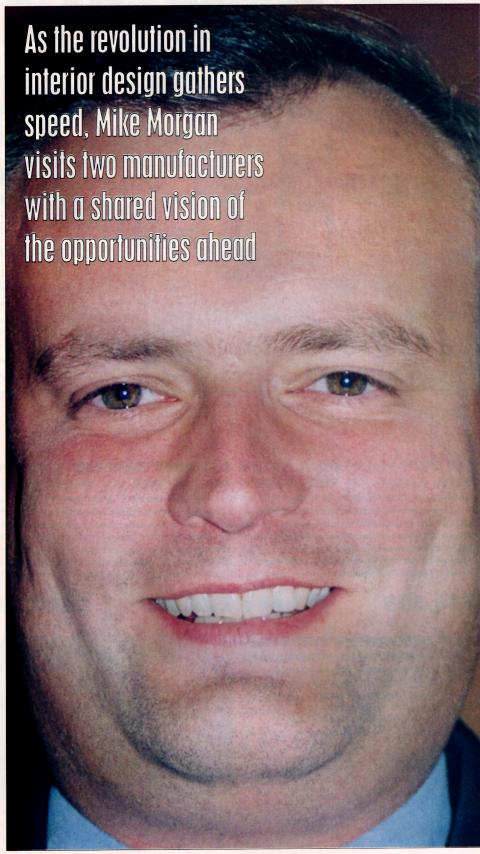


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# A complementary



James Valentine: heads-up TVI umbrella for Invertec and Lydney

HE PROOF OF THE PUDDING is in the balance sheet and, if you're seeking evidence of financial rewards from the unlikely courtship between a plywood manufacturer and a specialist in low-voltage florescent light, look no further.

Two years ago the management buyout team from Lydney Products on the banks of the River Severn and family-owned Invertec of Fairford established a joint venture to co-ordinate sales of two dissimilar, but remarkably complementary components commonly found in coach and bus interiors. The formation of TVI (Total Vehicle Interiors) was based on the firm belief that the rapid swing to outside sourcing by coachbuilders would favour an organisation able to supply a complete package. Their vision has been reinforced, and favoured, by the mould-breaking decision by FirstBus to develop a corporate interior, while the privatisation of the railways has given a very promising second string to its bow.

In a somewhat unconventional structure, TVI is headed up James Valentine, son of second director, Charles Valentine, principal of one of the two partners, Invertec. The other member of the board, John Rook, is managing director of Lydney. Invertec and Lydney remain independent manufacturers while TVI acts as an umbrella organisation, providing marketing support for the companies' common customers, its head office in Gloucester symbolically bridging the gap between Lydney to the West and Fairford to the East.

TVI was launched on the eve of Coach & Bus 95 and two years down the road James Valentine is in no doubt it has worked. He says response from bodybuilders to the one-stop shopping on offer has been positive with the general reaction: "The idea is great - we love it - can you do this for us?"

And he can point to some remarkable successes. The celebrated FirstBus interior as fitted to Plaxton Pointers benefits from TVI input. Floors, cove panels, cab, header boxes come from Lydney. Lighting is from Lydney.

Although the aim is to persuade coach and bus builders to place contracts for the supply of complete interiors, one of Mr Valentine's most prized contracts is for the interior lighting in Scania's Omnicity lowfloor bus - a vehicle built in Denmark (in the DAB factory), Sweden, France and eventually Poland - with annual production expected to be jacked up to 2000 by the year 2000.

Output of these three-metre concealed light units has required expansion at Fairford with a new dedicated production line opened up. The contract is for at least two years.

An aircraft-style luggage locker system has been developed for fitting into Duple Metsec-bodied Dennis Trident deckers for Hong Kong Citybus, using Lydney's Lydneyform laminate. This contract includes air-con ducts and continuous lighting and is initially worth £500,000 for 50 vehicles.

Mr Valentine says TVI's vehicle interior opportunities extend outside the coach and bus sector. The blossoming rail sector is on its hit list and it has a major order for the interiors in the new trains being built for the Chiltern Line. This

# partnership

moves the company closer to its total vehicle interior goal because all is to be supplied with the exception of the seats.

There are further opportunities in the maritime field, including possible refit of ferries.

As a consequence of the new attitude to interiors in all sectors, growth across Lydney and Invertec over the last 12 months has been between 25 and 30 per cent. Employment at both plants has increased.

Expected annualised joint turnover for 1997/8 is £15.5 million with the split between Lydney and Invertec in the ratio of 2:1, whereas the division between sectors is: £10 million coach and bus; £2.5 million rail; £1.5 million export; £750,000 marine - and Mr Valentine is confidently talking about being ahead of budget.

Moreover, there's scope for further expansion mainly overseas and in rail. Consequently, while not confirming that a merger is on the cards, the combined organisation continues its joint plans to prepare for change.

The staffing structure at Lydney has been geared to meet the needs of the company with double its existing turnover. Spearheading the revitalised company is John Rook, who plans to take a strategic brief as chairman once the recently-appointed managing director designate, Peter Anderson, moves into his chair (*CBW*, 18 September).

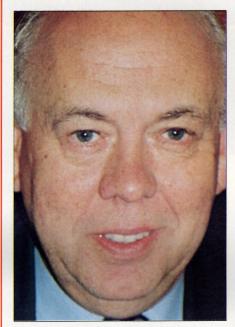
Mr Rook's ambition is to offer a complete design package to bodybuilders and each new piece of the jigsaw is a further step along the road to making his goal achievable. Capital investment at Lydney has been increased; a project engineer has been taken on board to introduce robotics; water jet testing is being tested; and research conducted into bonding different materials.

Meanwhile, over at Invertec where staffing has doubled to 84 in less than 24 months, there are plans to boost production capacity by up to 30% with a move to a new 20,000 sq ft factory phased over the next five years.

However, one of the company's most prized developments is a further enhancement of its core product, inverters for low-voltage florescent lighting. Developed with the benefit of a £45,000 DTI SMART grant, the new inverter is described by Charles Valentine as "semi-intelligent." It is designed to enhance tube life, is not damaged by tube failure or voltage surge and is offered with a 15-year warranty. The spur for this new compact component was the stringent needs of rail operators and Invertec claims it produces the component for less than its competitors. The good news is that the improved performance is available to the bus market for 'around the same price' as a conventional inverter.

Inverters, by the way, are vital components which have a habit of failing in the unsympathetic environment of an urban bus. For example, London Transport alone replaced 14,000 in the 12 months pre deregulation.

Yet this small part determines whether or not there is light when the driver operates the switch. Its importance cannot be overlooked - just as TVI's crusade to supply coach and bus manufacturers with a complete package cannot be ignored as we approach 'the year of the interior'.



John Rook: spearheading Lydney



Lighting is Invertec's strength



Lydneyform luggage lockers developed for Hong Kong Citybus



Prized contract: Invertec interior lights will be fitted in Scania Omnicity

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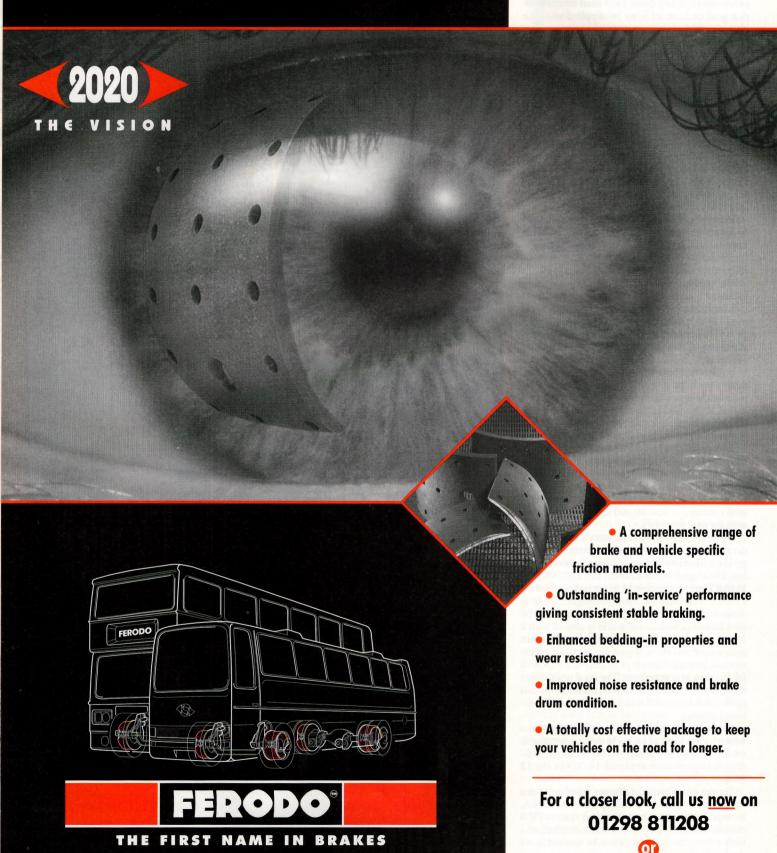
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# **AEC Regal IV/Metro-Cammell** BUILT TO LAST





Mike Morgan travels back in time to when the floors were high, the steering heavy, the buses built like tanks and drivers needed muscles...

t weighs in at under eight tonnes, carries 39 seated and eight standing, delivers just over eight miles to the gallon from a 126 bhp 9.6litre diesel engine, has the aerodynamics of a house brick and is accessed by three high steps and a narrow 700 mm door. It's a formula that would be laughed out of court in the access for all, customer-oriented 1990s. Yet it attracted a massive order for 700 from the country's largest bus operator and formed the foundation for a sizeable number of flagship coaches in the fleets of many family-owned coach companies.

Like many of the new vehicles on display in Hall 5 of the NEC last week, it was a product of its age. A vehicle designed to do a job - not without

London Transport RF: formula would be laughed out of court in the customer-oriented 1990s



RF136 was simply a number in the LT records until 1966 when it attained celebrity status as a pilot for a facelift to bring those used on Green Line

▶ ■ its faults but with one endearing quality - it was built to last.

A modern day equivalent could be the 145 bhp, 6,833 kg, 10.6-metre Dennis Dart SLF. When road tested by this magazine (*CBW*, 27 July 1996) with 39-seat plus 16-standee Plaxton body it returned 9.95 mpg, accelerated to 30 mph in 10.5 secs and recorded 74 dB(A) at 40 mph. Compare this with the subject of this road test: 126 bhp, 7,750 kg; 9.14 metres; 39 seats; 8 mpg; 0-30 mph in 18 secs; 80 dB(A).

These comparisons with a bus built almost 50 years ago started with a throw-away line at the end of a book revue on the Diary page of *CBW* when I offered to respond to the offer of a vintage bus for road test.

Classic Bus Tests, edited by Peter Waller and published by Ian Allan, is a reprint of pioneer coach and bus road tests conducted between 1932 and 1957 by the trade magazine, Motor Transport. The test reports have a sepia tinted appeal reinforced by the detailed accounts of a rigorous routine which tested men and machine to the limits.

In style and outcome they provide an interesting contrast with *CBW*'s operator-focused higher mileage tests. So, when the gauntlet was thrown down by a company ideally placed to stage a re-run of a classic test over the fabled *Motor Transport* Southern Test Route, the challenge had to be faced.

#### **BUILD**

Solid, dependable and heavy. That's the underfloor-engined AEC Regal IV, which as London Transport's RF type, dominated the single-deck scene in and around the capital for over two decades. The prototype took to the streets almost 50 years ago and the first of a massive order for 700 was ready in time for the Festival of Britain in 1951. The last was delivered two years later and the class ruled until modernisation in the shape of rear-engined high-capacity vehicles spelt the end of the road.

But, such was the reputation of the RF that many found eager buyers on the second-hand mar-

ket despite phenomenal mileage in gruelling conditions.

One such is RF136, first registered MLL 523 in 1952. It was simply a number in the LT records until 1966 when it attained celebrity status as a pilot for a facelift to bring those used on Green Line services into line with contemporary ideas.

Consequently it was treated to twin headlamps, barrel type windscreen on the driver's side, Routemaster type wheel arches, and a livery style to match the new AEC Reliance coaches, threatening to push them off the streets. Inside, the moquette and trim was replaced with that used in the Reliance-type vehicles and the modernisation completed with the fitment of florescent lighting.

Thirty years later RF136 retains this 1960s look in a 1950s body. It has now been in the ownership of one-time printer, Jim McNamara, for longer than it ran with LT and, thanks to recertification eight years ago, it works for a living as an active member of the Mitcham-based Nostalgiabus fleet which was started by Roy Gould six years ago.

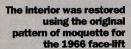
When first built RF136 was one of 225 painted



services into line with contemporary ideas



Thanks to recertification eight years ago, the RF works for a living as an active member of the Mitcham-based Nostalgiabus fleet







A scrap RF is acquired from time to time as a donor vehicle.

green for those long-distance limited stop routes that criss-crossed the capital. It had 39 seats, including an extra large single sideways facing seat usually requisitioned by the conductor.

By 1966 one man operation, pioneered on three country area RF-types in 1954, had become the norm. However, most of the class had covered more than a million miles and an article in the trade magazine *Bus and Coach* quoted a remarkable level of reliability. Failures in service averaged one per 70,000 miles (approximate to once a year). Overhauls of mechanical units, carried out on the asrequired basis then in use averaged around every 200,000 miles for engines and 300,000 miles for the preselector gearboxes. Fuel consumption averaged 8.2 mpg.

#### **OPERATOR IMPRESSIONS**

Today this old stager lives a less stressful existence. But it still has to get up at 0700 hrs to take the kids to school. A quick run round the block takes it to

Nonsuch High School for Girls - yes, there is such a place - and, together with the afternoon run, another 50 miles is put on the clock - sorry, tachograph. Saturday is a day of rest before it ventures out into the countryside for its 186-mile Sunday bus schedule which is part of the Surrey Hills project.

These are not taxing duties but, at the age of 45, it's the bus equivalent of active retirement. Maintenance is cost effective and predictable. A scrap RF is acquired from time to time as a donor vehicle and, according to Mr McNamara, the legend lives on. During the last six years it has broken down no more than once a year. He doesn't need to refer to his maintenance records to reel off the offending faults. The starter failed; a return valve stuck, an air pipe fractured, the differential started to groan, the engine was replaced and a new gearbox fitted.

Routine adjustment to the brakes every four weeks retains stopping power between biennial relines. And it uses around six pints of oil a week through leakage.

Bodywork deterioration has been minimal as discovered last year when a car ran into the back of the Metro-Cammell steel-framed Aluminium clad structure.

The interior was restored using the original pattern of moquette as used during the 1966 face-lift but the seat cushions received new foam, providing an agreeable level of comfort to match the excellent ride quality from the high-deflection leaf springs. And, of course, the legendary easy-change pre-selector gearbox keeps the ride jerk free while there's a high-quality stereo system to disguise the RF's antiquity from its youthful passengers. There can't be many buses of this age which are quiet enough to make a radio worthwhile. However, the RF is no ordinary bus. "Built to last," is Mr McNamara's verdict

#### **DRIVER IMPRESSIONS**

This conclusion is reinforced when you sit in the upright and deeply upholstered driver's seat where everything appears to be indestructible. No soft surfaces or padded edges here - its all

#### NOSTALGIA ROAD TEST

heavy metal in the cab and nowhere more so than the steering wheel itself.

If you've ever wondered why aerobics, city centre gymnasiums and health clinics are a modern phenomena, I now have the answer, having enjoyed a day at work in the cab of an RF with uncharacteristically heavy steering... We have it too soft.

I've driven many vehicles which have tested biceps and strengthened calf muscles as part of the daily routine. However, that was before the days of finger-light steering, spring-release handbrakes, air suspension and touch-button automatics. It's difficult to believe that power steering was at first scorned by seasoned drivers. Then it became essential otherwise they refused to take the bus out. Likewise the joy of crash gearboxes couldn't compare with the temperamental semi-automatic. Now, of course, every bus has seamless automatics and air suspension is the norm. It's an easy life.

Yet there's unequalled satisfaction when putting the RF through its paces.

Motor Transport said the brakes on the Regal IV chassis were effective on the descent to the Brighton Road crossing in Purley. It said heavy traffic on the Eastbourne Road and at Caterham required frequent gear changes, proving how ideal is the preselector type of transmission under adverse road conditions. Indeed, the accolades were flowing as they described it as "the sweetest drive one could wish for on a heavy vehicle. Jerkiness seemed impossible," the caveat being that the right sequence of operation should be followed.

It praised the "easy handling steering" as tested on the hairpin turn on to Caterham bypass and at full speed back toward Warlingham. Perhaps the road layout has changed but the hairpin now needs the full work-out of a three point turn and, though good, stability at the heavily-governed 45 mph does not compare favourably with modern chassis.

#### PERFORMANCE

Throughout the rest of the test across Worms Heath, down Titsey Hill, across from Limpsfield to Westerham and return past Biggin Hill to the start at Croydon, the performance of this remarkable survivor was identical to that original examination on 27 September 1952. In particular hill climbing

and acceleration figures were uncannily similar and separated only by the inevitable consequences of a coach rear axle ratio on the original test which resulted in 51 mph top speed and lower gears used

One further difference is the recorded fuel economy. Unlike Motor Transport's measured consumption over a 14-mile stretch, CBW prefers whole- test results at the end of carefully planned mixed driving, believing that this is more realistic. You can judge for yourself which is best. MT recorded 11.8 mpg, CBW 8 mpg and London Transport averaged 8.2 mpg across its entire fleet of 700 vehicles.

#### **VERDICT**

The true measure of this AEC is its record and MT was right in its assessment that this was a bus which combined ease of driving with levels of ride and noise refinement that put it ahead of the competition at that time.

However, those test pioneers could not predict its longevity, nor could they explain why, apart from London, there were no other large orders before production ceased in 1954.

Perhaps PSV historians can postulate a theory which relates the politics of vehicle acquisition to the evolution of lighter, cheaper, more fuel-efficient vehicles. Ironically, half a century later, the debate still hasn't been resolved, with the heavyweight lobby pointing to greater durability and lower wholelife costs while the lightweight supporters quote savings on the purchase price and better fuel economy

In truth it's a question of horses for courses. That the Regal IV is a very durable machine is not a matter for dispute. Yet it needed the might of London Transport to resolve early problems of excessive brake wear, suspension rattle, and stiff steering after overhaul. In retrospect these are temporary irritations but, at the time, they threatened to tarnish its reputation in the marketplace.

While even present day manufacturers may reluctantly confess that there isn't such a thing as a perfect bus, this 45-year-old RF is remarkable testimony to a design that really has stood the test of



That the Regal IV is a very durable machine is not a matter for dispute

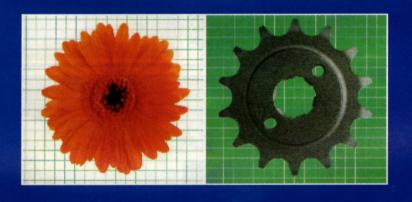
<b>SPECIFICATION</b>	
CHASSIS:	1952 AEC Regal IV 9821LT
BODY:	Metro Cammell Weyman
	39 seat
PRICE:	£6,000 depending on
	condition
ENGINE:	AEC six cylinder
POWER:	125 bhp @ 1,800 rpm
CAPACITY:	9.6 litre
GEARBOX:	Wilson four-speed pre-
	select
STEERING:	AEC two-start worm and
	nut
BRAKES:	single circuit air system
	drums front and rear
	handbrake - ratchet type
SUSPENSION:	leaf springs with stabiliser
	front and rear
FRONT AXLE:	AEC rigid beam
REAR AXLE:	AEC - ratio 5.166:1
TYRES:	10.00x20
DIMENSIONS	
Length:	9.14 metres
Width:	2.286 metres
Wheelbase:	4.978 metres
Unladen weight:	7,750 kg
GVW:	11,000 kg
PERFORMANCE	
Test consumption:	CBW re-run of 1952 Motor
	Transport test - 8 mpg
	Motor Transport test
	27 September 1952
	- <b>11</b> .8 mpg
	LT average in service - 8.2
	mpg
Acceleration:	0-30 mph - 18 secs
	0-50 mph - 38 secs
Noise levels at 45	
mph:	front - 80 dB(A)
	middle - 80 dB(A)
	rear - 80 dB(A)



Heavy metal: no power assistance here

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everyone's quality of life. Fortunately, reductions in excise duty, with further incentives in the pipeline, encourage the use of low emission fuels and make sound commercial sense. Why not give us a call at the number below to find out why bus companies such as Metroline, London Links and London Pride like our customer-friendly terms and have switched to Greenergy - for everyone's benefit.



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# Contribution to a Quality Partnership

#### **ODTARF**

THREE weeks into their operation, Optare Excels like this one have attracted between 2% and 3% additional loadings, says Ipswich Buses.

The seven, 38-seater lowfloor buses all serve two cross-town routes - services 8 and 13 - carrying shoppers and others who appreciate the accessibility. The integral vehicles have an easy-clean interior with Richards & Shaw Tempo seating, anti-slip flooring and the standard kneeling suspension.

They are the operator's contribution to a Quality Partnership with the local council, which which be installing flush kerb heights, further bus priority, shelters and timetabling improvements which, Mr Robson says, will further

boost ridership.

But despite the two-inch 'step' between kerb and bus, Ipswich Buses has already attracted regular wheelchair passengers who have praised the user-friendliness of the buses.

The Suffolk operator is a regular customer for Optare, already owning 28 Optare vehicles including 15 MetroRiders, five Deltas and a Sigma. It is so pleased with the performance of the Excels, that it is about to buy two more. "We've have had no problems with these vehicles. Indeed, we don't have any spares, and haven't needed any," said Mr Robson.

any," said Mr Robson.

"Though we are a keen Optare customer, we tested four manufacturers' lowfloors before deciding the Excels were what we wanted."





# **Leeds City Link Olympians set for busy time**

#### **ALEXANDER**

FIRSTBUS subsidiary Leeds City Link has put the first of 16 new Olympians into service on its busiest cross-city routes.

The buses will be run on ultra-low sulphur diesel, improving the emissions of their Euro 2 engines significantly. And the standard FirstBus interior layout and colours are expected to further build loadings.

"On some of our busiest routes, we need the carrying capacity which only a double decker can provide," said md Steve Graham. "These new vehicles mark a significant advance over previous generations of buses, offering our customers a high standard of comfort in an attractive environment."

The Alexander Royale bodies are fitted with 72 Scanflex seats. Tinted glazing, high-visibility handrails and

colourful fabrics help improve the interior 'feel' of the buses.

The buses are part of an order for 144 Royales being delivered to First-Bus companies in the next 12 months.

In Leeds, Alexander has supplied the adapted Strider buses used on the guided busway.

Pictured are (l-r) are: Alexander's Clive Hodgson; Thompson Baxter of Volvo; Leeds City Link md Steve Graham; and John Carr of Metro.

# Irizar has

#### **SCANIA**

THIS Scania Irizar InterCentury has all the style and sophistication Steels of Addingham wanted for its frontline work. The Yorkshire operator bought the coach for its UK work, opting to have 57 seats instead of a toilet, but with the current favourite 'extra' - actually standard fitment on Irizar - full air conditioning. So far,





# air-con as standard

the gambit is paying off.

"It's extremely impressive," said proprietor Tim Steel. "I think the InterCentury leads the field for design. A lot of thought has gone into the equipment.

"Comfort Shift is brilliant, though I think a novice driver needs some training before using it. The customer reaction has been that the coach gives a very smooth ride."

Mr Steel runs around 10 vehicles, including a minibus and two or three midicoaches for smaller groups. Two full-sized coaches service local private hire, and two full executives are retained for Steels' tour and excursion work.

Steels, started by Tim Steels' father, is fast approaching its 50th anniversary, serving the community around the Ilkley area.



#### IN BRIEF



# **London Central: 50 Palatines**

A TOTAL of 50 of these Northern Counties Palatines are going into the fleet of Go-Ahead subsidiary London Central for City and south London routes. The two-door double deckers have Olympian chassis and 74 seats.



# **Nottingham buys MetroRiders**

NOTTINGHAM City Transport has bought eight Optare MetroRider 4s, which will take the company's total of the type to 33. The 31 seaters will be allocated to new routes serving the city hospital.



# **Timeline lowfloor king in NW**

LEIGH based Timeline Travel has taken nine Optare Excels, giving it the strongest lowfloor presence in the North West. Out of a total fleet strength of 88 buses, 16 are now lowfloors and 15 of these operate out of Bolton depot.



Don is taking brake training directly to fleets with tailored on-site courses

# n-site training for operators

BBA FRICTION'S brake specialist Don is offering on-site training direct to operators

Courses are specifically tailored to any area of brake technology. Disc brakes developments, use of asbestos-free linings, preparing brakes for MoT, preventing brake noise and reducing brake wear can all be taught by Don's experts.

"It is this area where I see the greatest ben-

efits for fleets," said marketing manager Alistair Hill. "By taking courses to a specific operator we can tailor course content and the technical level to meet staff requirements, and ensure it is timed to fit within operation schedules." The courses will be supported by the latest computer and audio-visual aids, techniques and background notes.

To find out more, contact Alistair Hill, on 0161 205 2371.

Consultants commissioned

# A strategy for **S Rotherham**

#### **By Mark Williams**

TRANSPORT consultancy Oscar Faber has been commissioned to help develop a transport strategy for South Rotherham.

The St Albans-based company is to set out recommendations for a 10-year plan, with the aim of its transport strategy aiding South Rotherham Rural Development Area - a community regeneration and job creation scheme.

The study has been instigated by South Yorkshire PTE, the Rural Development Commission and Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council. They

recognise that the region has suffered from the decline of key industries, poor internal links, social and economic deprivation, limited jobs and relatively poor educational and skill attainments.

But development and investment will be dependent on sustainable and affordable transport strategies. Oscar Faber is determined to provide an attractive alternative to car transport which will enable travel to work.

The plan is likely to include bus corridors, job-aride and park-and-ride, with an examination of post buses and community transport schemes.

# **Sump oil 'wheelie bin'**

PERMEX'S 'wheelie bin' for sump oil could be a real asset in any lift-equipped workshop. The RL42065 model can hold up to 65 litres of oil, drained via a 13litre bowl on a heightadjustable column.

The bowl has special drainage rack for oil filters, and the reservoir its own level gauge and instant shutoff ball valve in the central column. A small tool tray is built into the unit so the sump plug doesn't go missing. When it's time to drain the unit, it is connected via a bottom hose to the storage tank, and an air line connected to empty the reservoir quickly and completely.

Full details and price from Permex, of Hoddesdon, Herts, on 01992 451494.



for small garage/workshops



Roadlink range of components includes shackle pins and bushes, and ball joints

# **PSV steering and suspension parts**

ROADLINK has launched a range of coach and bus steering and suspension components, to add to its existing range of brake and chassis parts. The spares are, according to Roadlink, manufactured by OE companies, and include shackle pins and bushes, king pins, ball joints, anti-roll bush kits, and

A catalogue of parts is available from Roadlink, on 01902 606210.

# NCT claims 4% savings in fuel costs

A FUEL ADDITIVE is being claimed by Nottingham City Transport to save up to 4% on fuel costs... and is now in every bus's tank.

Triple-E, marketed by Tetrosyl, has also been on trial at Mainline, where engineering director Bernard Keene estimates fuel savings of up to 5%: "Everything Triple-E claimed has been confirmed through our ongoing appraisals," he said.

Go-Ahead North East has been running its fleet on Triple-E for several years, and Mainline its fleet of 800 vehicles for a year.



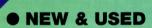
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# Volvo. Coach of the Year for the third consecutive year.

#### 1984 DAF **Jonckheere**

49 recliners, video, toilet, P.A., seatbelts, curtains. All in white. MoT July 1998

£31,000 or very near offer

First to see will buy

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0467 784390

### **SCANIA K112 PLAXTON 3500**

1989 F REG

Fully fitted with seat belts, demountable toilet, full draw curtains, 49/55 seats, MoT till November 1997, 1 owner from new, good condition

0181 366 4337

#### LEYLAND LEOPARDS SEMI AUTO, POWER STEERING

Willowbrook rebody 10M, 43 seats, MoT Alexander P reg, 53 seats, MoT 8/98 £2,900 Willowbrook S reg, 53 seats, MoT 8/98.

£2.750 2 x Willowbrook 003 V reg, 49 seats, MoT 4/98/6/98.....£2,250 each
Duple Dom II, V reg, 53 seats, MoT . . £2,250 each 10/98 . . . . . . . . £3,500 2 x Alexander Manual, 53 seats MoT 5/98/6/98 . . . . . . . £1,500-£1,900 each TYRES AND VAT EXTRA

Davies Bros, Pencader 01559 384 821

1982 FORD DUPLE DOMI-NANT 4, 53 seats, tinted windows, armrest, headrest covers, carpet .....£4,995 ono

1978 VOLVO B58 CAE-TANO, 53 seats, curtains, carpets, seatbelts, radio cassette, microphone address system, MoT and .....£7,500 ono

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£72,500 + VAT 1990 (H) CAETANO ALGARVE VOLVO B10M, 53 seats and courier seat. Sutrak air conditioning. MoT till September, '98...

air conditioning. MoT till September, 98...
£71,000 + VAT

1989 (G) LEYLAND DAF 400, diesel, 16
seats. Factory conversion, MoT till
August, '98.....£2,150 + VAT

1991 (J) LEYLAND DAF 200. Diesel, 12 seats. MoT till April, '98 ......£2,650 + VAT

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very good condition, 53 seater, excellent for year

£35,000 ono (no VAT). 1984 LEYLAND TIGER

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£27,000 ono (no VAT).

Both can be sold with 12 months MOT.

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#### 1987 **DAF MB2300 PLAXTON** 3200

52 seats plus toilet and drinks machine, MoT February 1998 £32,000 ono

#### 1988 DAF DHTD PLAXTON 3200 LOWDRIVER

53 recliners, radio cassette, PA, a classy motor, MoT August 1998 £42,000

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Fully fitted with seatbelts, radio/ cassette/PA, full draw curtains, 53 seats plus courier, MoT to May, tax to July, one owner from new, good condition.

NEEDS TO BE SEEN

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Mercedes V8 twin turbo. Voith retarder, double glazed, owned by us from

new, low mileage. **Excellent** condition £159,000 + VAT

"Also 91 available" EBDONS COACHES LTD 0181 300 7606 or 0181 302 2908

Bedford Plaxton Coach 17 seater + 4 w/chairs, 1987, PSV 330 Turbo Diesel, £6,950.00 Renault/Dodge 39 Seater Perkins Diesel - Full PSV Test

Excellent throughout, £4,700.00 Iveco 49-10 16 seater or 2 + 7 w/chairs, 1989, full PSV Test very clean £4,500.00

Leyland Daf 1988 High top - wheelchair access - Petrol £750.00

Leyland Daf - Robinhood body 8 seater + w/chair lift, 1987, long MoT - very clean, £1,750.00 All vehicles + VAT

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#### 2 x 1978 A.E.C. 760

Reliance Plaxton Supreme

1 x 53 seat

no test but mechanically sound £1,000

1 x 49 seat

tested to November

£1,500 Telephone

01332 205400 or 556846

MAKE	BODY	REG DATE	COF	SEATS	W/CHAIR	PRICE
Merc 609	Reeve Burgess	1.3.88	Nov 98	23	N/A	£12,500
Merc 609	Advance	22.8.88	July 98	20	N/A	£12,950
Leyland	Reeve Burgess	1.9.86	Aug 98	30	12 w/c	£6,500
Leyland	Wadham Stringer	1.2.87	April 98	24	8 w/c	£4,500
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(West Midlands)

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Air over leaf, 83 seats. tested till February 1998

£9,000 ono + VAT

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55 seats, engine rebuilt last two years, seatbelted, MoT 'til August '98, taxed June '98

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NEW MB410 SPRINTER. 16 seater luxury mini coach with large rear boot. Algarve M2 seating, Webasto saloon heater, luggage racks, vents & stere LEYLAND DAF 400 TURBO DIESEL, '94 M' Power steering. New G & M Coachwork, luxury conversion. Low front entrance steps, high roof, wide centre aisle, coach style seating, full belts, luggage racks, heater, stereo, tinted glass & side skirts.

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New COIF & MoT. . £12,500 + VAT IVECO 49:10 COACHBUILT. '88 E'. 20 seat or 16 seat + 2 wheelchairs. Power door, Henderson Hide-away lift, recent new interior trim, seats and belts, Eberspacher heater. Resprayed and new MoT. FIAT DUCATO DIESEL. '90 G'. High roof, 12 seat luggage. PSV. Front entrance, high back coach style 

LEYLAND DAF 400 DIESEL. '91 H'. 16 seat PSV. Electric power entrance door, full soft trim, high back seats with belts, luggage racks, heater. Re-sprayed £7,200 + VAT

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with semi auto and East Lancs single entrance, 75 seats with test and tyres £5,000 immediate.

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1984 MERCEDES 608D service bus. 18 high back seats. Choice of two. MoT's 01/09/98 and 26/11/97. One with Diptac features

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Fully fitted with seat belts, demountable toilet, full draw curtains, 49/55 seats, MoT till November 1997, 1 owner from new, good condition

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50 recliners, taxed Feb '98, tested June '98.

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arriving this week. Phone for details Breaking Leyland Leopard Duple Dominant 2 Stock changing daily phone with your requirements FINANCE ARRANGED SUBJECT TO STATUS

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Tel: 01502 711611

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£110,000 ovno

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Talbot 2.5 Diesel

Triaxle, 1987, 20 + 8 standees, test April 98

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49 seater executive, as new condition

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Javelins – ex MOD Hong Kong
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From £121 p week

From £121 p week
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Raised floor. Under body chair lift. Lowered front entry. Luxury trim and fittings. Tracked rear M2 seats. Panoramic tinted windows. Full sized coach seats. Spacious and flexible.

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R Fiat EuroCab 2000. Ultra modern wheelchair accessible 'Black Cabs'. Choice of colours R Fiat EuroCab 2000. Ultra modern wheelchair accessible 'Black Cabs'. Choice of colours models, 6 and 7 seaters. Over 50 options and design specifications including turbo diesel, traditional taxi rear ends, multiple wheelchair access, 2 way intercom systems, taxi door locking units, lowered suspension options, modern taxi sign pods, kerb loading seating etc.

From £69 p week R Mercedes Benz. 7 seater. EuroCab, luxury 'Black Cabs'. Executive hackney interior with heavy duty partition and taxi style trim and fittings. Lowered suspension with access for 2 large wheelchairs. Ultra modern design. Front and rear luggage bays. Vented rear heating and optional vented air conditioning system. Choice of specs and colours.

From £89 p week

From £89 p week

R Ducato Diesel. Luxury 8 seater Taxi bus. Super luxury trim and M2 seating. Front luggage bay. Tracking for one wheelchair with options for more. Executive interior styling.

Tinted hi line windows. Unbeatable value for money.

#### Quality New Conversions on low mileage vehicles

P Ford 2.5 D. Executive 8 seater Taxi buses. Choice of 6 superb vehicles. All low mileage one owner with brand new luxury Jubilee conversions. M2 seating and tracking for one wheelchair. Front and rear luggage options. Standard and semi high tops.

From £61 p week

N Volkswagen diesel. Luxury 8 seater Taxi buses. Choice of colours. New super luxury Jubilee conversions. High backed M2 seats in moquette. Tracking for one wheelchair passenger. Options for front and rear luggage. Superb throughout.

From £59 p week

N Fiat Ducato Diesel. SWB. Luxury 8 seater faxi bus. Beautiful example with full M2 seating and wheelchair access. Tinted windows. Luxury trim. Front luggage pen. Perfect for air-port transfer or executive work.

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N Ford 2.5 D. Executive 8 seaters. Luxury moquette trim. Tracking for one wheelchair. Choice of 3. Standard and semi high top examples. Tinted windows, luxury carpet. Wheel trims and executive graphics pack. Top value for money.

M Renault Trafic Diesel. SWB luxury 8 seater taxi buses. New M2 high quality conversions. Choice of colours and trims. Fitted with wheelchair tracking. Low floor access.

Choice of 5 - From only £8,995 or just £49 p week

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Previously owned vehicles

P Fiat Scudo. Wheelchair accessible Taxi bus. Rear Rolac ramp. Tracked seating. Luxury trim. PAS, tinted windows. Metallic paint. Very low mileage.

P Ford Jubilee EuroCab. Executive 8 seater taxi with full EuroCab body style kit. Semi raised roof. Alloy wheels. Luxury moquette trim. Tracked seating. Wheelchair access. Cost over £25,000 new.

M LDV 400 D. 16 seaters. Choice of 3 super low mileage examples. All with PAS, M2 seats and lap diag. seatbelts. Ideal for school contract and private hire work. Unbeatable value for money. All finished in white with cloth trim.

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M Ford Transit LWB 2.5 Turbo D. 15 seaters. Mint condition. M2 seats and belts. Choice of 3 semi high tops. All one owner. All ready to go right now. Choice of manual or fully automatic gearboxes. Please call for details.

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M Ford Transit 2.5 D. 8 and 12 seaters. Choice of 5. Various colours. Standard roof and semi high models available. M2 seats and seatbelts. Choice of seating plans.

3 left

M Volkswagen LT28 Diesel. 12 passengers with front luggage pen. Diagonal seat belts. Superb condition, Very low recorded mileage. A rare opportunity.

L Ford Transit 2.5D LWB. 15 seaters. Choice of 3. Superb condition, inside and out. Fitted seat belts. Ready to work. Buy, finance or lease from just

K Nissan Diesel. 6 and 7 seaters. Low mileage. New luxury trim. Wheelchair accessible. Choice of colours and specifications. Top value for money.

K Renault Trafic 8 seater Taxi buses. Choice of 2 with wheelchair access. Low mileage. Mint condition. Perfect for local wheelchair contracts. Top value for money.

One left

K Yauxhall Midi SWB. Wheelchair accessible mini bus. Fitted with removable seats and a new Ratcliffe wheelchair lift. Very low recorded mileage. Beautiful condition £59 per week



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### **TOYOTA OPTIMO**

19/21 seat, 6 cylinder turbo diesel, finished in unmarked white, red velour interior, PAS outstanding condition, full test

£19.995 + VAT

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### K-REG MERCEDES 609D LUXURY AX-S, MINI BUSES



RS cassette chair lift, 15 moquette seats on tracking, 3 point seat belts, wheelchair tracking, 4 wheel chairs, olding front entry door, saloon heater, very very low mileages, built by Mellors, choice of 10 vehicles

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#### 92 J reg TOYOTA OPTIMO II

18 seat luxury coach, 90,000 miles only, high ratio diff, mint condition £27,995 + VAT

Lease/Buy from £116 p/w



#### F reg **MERCEDES 507D**

15 seat luxury minicoach, front entry, high back seats, lap and diagonal seatbelts, exceptional condition

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Lease/Buy from £71 p/w





#### **DIESEL TRANSIT**

8-11 seat diesel minibuses, SWB, highback luxury seats, 3 point seatbelts, mileages from 7,000-40,000 miles, all in superb condition from

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#### J 92 TRANSIT DIESEL

14 seat luxury cruiser, 14 high back seats, COIF, in this superb Deansgate conversion £8.995 + VAT

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#### N 96 LDV CONVOY TURBO DIESEL

16 seat hi top, factory spec, choice of 2, under 10,000 miles, factory warranty, mint condition

£16,995 + VAT Lease/Buy from £75 p/w



#### N 96 LDV CONVOY

16 hi-back seats, 3 point seat belts, mint condition, power steering, full C.O.I.F., choice of 3 from

£14.995 + VAT

Lease/Buy from £60 p/w



#### M 95 **TRANSIT 190 DIESEL**

14 seat minibus, advanced conversion, high back seats, COIF, low mileage, choice of 4, excellent condition

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#### M Req **LDV 400**

Diesel 16 seater, power steering, high back seats, 3 point lap diagonal belts, 43,000 miles, outstanding condition, C.O.I.F. Choice of 3

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#### J 92 TRANSIT

6 seat auto luxury minibus, twin side load doors, seat belts, finished in metallic blue, new style front grille, superb condition

£7,995 + VAT Lease/Buy from £39 p/w



#### K 93 **MERCEDES 814 TURBO**

21 seater, front entry, luggage racks, P.A.S., skirts, outstanding example of this much sought after vehicle

£26,995+ VAT Lease/Buy from £112 p/w

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£4,995 + VAT



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M reg

MIDI TURBO DIESEL

8 seater, power steering, electric windows, finished in blue, excellent

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12 seat diesel minibuses, highback seats, power steering, 3 point seatbelts, superb low mileage vehicles in showroom condition, choice of 2 from £12,995 + VAT

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#### **BRAND NEW MERCEDES** VITO DIESEL

7-8 seat luxury people carriers, luxury interiors, luggage room, twin side loading doors, stereo. In stock now 2 only £18,995 + VAT

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#### LDV CONVOY

16 seat luxury supercruiser, front entry, lowered entry step, 16 highback M2 tested seats, panoramic tinted windows, luggage racks, PAS, 9,000 miles only, brand new conversion, factory warranty, COIF, choice of 3

£18,998 + VAT

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# N reg TRANSIT

9 seat diesel, luxury long wheelbase, simply stunning conversion, highback M2 tested seats, PAS, 32,000 miles, luggage space, outstanding throughout £14,995 + VAT

Lease/Buy from £65 p/w



### **MERCEDES 507D**

15 seat luxury AX-S minicoach, newly refurbished, 15 highback Vogel seats, PLS hidden tail lift, beautiful condition,COIF

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### **LDV 400**

16 seat luxury minicoaches, choice of 2 newly converted vehicles, 16 highback M2 tested seats, 3 point seatbelts, tinted panoramic windows luggage racks, very low mileage, first class condition

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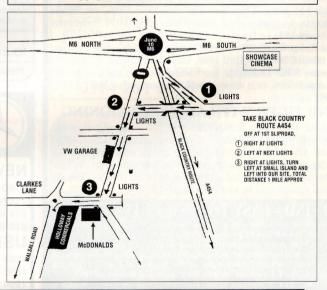
#### PART EXCHANGE BARGAINS

H 91 TRANSIT HI-ROOF, 14 seat luxury accessible minibus, superb Jubilee conversion, PLS underfloor tail lift, fully tracked, 64,000 miles, COIF, excellent condition ......£6,995 + VAT

F 89 RENAULT MASTER DIESEL, 14 seat front entry luxury minicoach, underfloor luggage, high back coach seats with seat belts, good condition, COIF .....£4,995 + VAT

D 86 OPTARE CITYPACER, 25 seats, auto, velour seats, power door, certified seatbelts, reconditioned engine, full COIF, good condition .....£5,995 + VAT

H 91 TRANSIT DIESEL, 8 seat minibus, long wheelbase, high back seats, luggage area, excellent vehicle .....£6,995



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MANY **VEHICLES** IN BUILD

# **Houston Ramm**

#### **COACH-SEATED VEHICLES**

1988 F Freight Rover Sherpa 350 16-seat coach, Crystals conversion with high-back coach seats in attractive blue/grey moquette, twin luggage rackes, saloon speakers, 2-point intertia reel seatbelts to all seats, recent respray in white, MOT 9/98, but new MOT also included, £4,995

1989 F Renault S56 Mark II East Lancs 21 seat coach, Perkins 4-cylinder turbo, automatic gearbox, disc brakes, retarder, price includes retrim in your choice of moquette as well as our usual preparation package, one

only, £6,995

1988 E Iveco 49.10 Turbodaily Robin Hood, 19-seat coach, automatic gearbox, beige/orange interior, luggage pen, power door, one only, £3,995 1987 D and E Renault S56 Mark I 19/21 seat coaches, Alexander AM type alloy bodywork, automatic gearboxes, power doors, beige/orange moquette, saloon heaters, good condition, ideal dual-purpose vehicles. just four left, £4,295 to £4,795 ONE RESPRAYED IN WHITE, RETRIMMED IN HOLDWORTH GRAFFITI AND READY FOR **IMMEDIATE DELIVERY!!** 

#### **BUS-SEATED VEHICLES - READY NOW:**

1988 F Renault S56 Mark II Northern Counties 25-seat bus, 4-cylinder Phaser engine, power steering, disc brakes, automatic gearbox, attractive beige/multicolour interior, power door, 7 standees, one quality owner from new, vehicle has been MoT'd and panelled this week and awaits your paint instructions, one only left, £5,495

1986 D Freight Rover Sherpa 20-seat bus, Carlyle Mark I bodywork, Ford DI diesel engine and 5-speed Ford MT75 gearbox, choice of two, one

being prepared for this weekend, £3,995 each.

Wide choice of Iveco, Renault MCW and Mercedes 608 buses with between 19 and 25 seats always available, awaiting your preparation and finishing instructions. Prices from £3,795 plus VAT, delivery between two and four weeks from date of order.

All the above prices include our full preparation package, comprising a new PCV MOT, full mechanical inspection and report with defects rectified, and all necessary body repairs and repanelling. Trade-ins are welcomed, and we can offer finance for any vehicle in stock, subject to status. Big reductions for vehicles sold prior to preparation!

#### **DUE IN SHORTLY**

1989 F Talbot Pullman 12/19 seat wheelchair accessible with tail lift, one only, MOT 4/98

1988/9 F MCW MetroRider MF150, 25-seat buses, Cummins engines, disc brakes, attractive brown interiors, good choice.

1988 E MCW MetroRider MF150, 25-seat buses, Cummins engines, disc brakes, choice of two, new MOT's, resprayed burgundy/cream.

#### THIS WEEK'S DRIVE-AWAY BARGAINS

1988 E Renault S56 Mark II Northern Counties 25-seat bus, coachbuilt front end, Perkins 4-cylinder Phaser/automatic, long MOT, resprayed white, seat belts, £4,195

1987 D Freight Rover Sherpa 20-seat bus, Dormobile body, white exterior, recent engine rebuild, MOT to April 1998, very clean vehicle, £1,395 1985 B Mercedes 508D Deansgate short-wheelbase, 16-seat coach, full size low-back coach seats, twin doors at back, blue moquette, MOT 12/97 one only, £1,995

#### LEYLAND TIGER WITH AIR CONDITIONING

1986 PP Leyland Tiger with Berkhof Everest 370 Mark II bodywork. Comprehensive specification includes 5-speed Hydracyclic gearbox, 49/53 Vogel recliners, video, centre sunken toilet, drinks machine, massive luggage capacity and air conditioning. Price to include new MOT. Vehicle has just had the bodywork prepared and resprayed in our own workshops. Second identical vehicle may be available later

#### EASY TO FIND - EASY TO VIEW - EASY TO BUY

Our 20,000 square foot workshops incorporate mechanical, body and paintshop facilities, so that any vehicle can be prepared to your specification, using our own staff and facilities. Our newly completed outdoor display area can house up to 50 extra vehicles. We can include seat-belts, signwriting and other finishing work in an agreed financed package, using some of the largest and most reputable finance companies in the UK. Phone us now for expert and honest advice! We are easy to find, just 3 minutes from Junction 20 of the M62, North of Manchester. Phone us for faxed direction sheet, vehicle description sheets or photos! We are open all day Monday to Saturday, with viewing on Sundays by prior arrangement.

### **Sales Hotline: Rochdale (01706) 750570**

including evenings and weekends

LEYLAND DAF 400, 2.5 diesel, 1990, 16 seats with approved seatbelts, high roof, coach spec, 1 years MoT, £3,750 ono + VAT. Tel: 01236 422239.

1993 TALBOT EXPRESS 2.5 Diesel, 14 hi-back seats, hi-roof, seat belts fitted, radio cassette, finished in white, excellent condition, £7,000 ono + VAT. Tel: 0191 3842873.

# & D HOLT



#### **1990 OPTARE** CITYPACER

manual, full 12 month test, dual purpose semi high-back seats. 25 seater

£6.750

M REG BEDFORD MIDI, Diesel, 8 seater minibus, 63,000 miles warrant RENAULT DODGE S56. Plaxton Beaver style, re-painted, nice clean soft trim, tested ready for work ......£4,950 J reg RENAULT MASTER, 8/9 seater, wheelchair facilities ... ....£5,250 tracking reg IVECO ACCESS BUS, hideaway tail-lift, seatbelts, painted F reg RENAULT MASTER, 15 seat minicoach, lap belts, tested, fully repainted .....£4,750

You can have any of these vehicles painted in a base colour All vehicles checked before delivery

WE ARE LOOKING TO BUY FLEETS LEASE/FINANCE AVAILABLE. PX TAKEN. Tel: 01204 525835



# As seen at NEC Coach & Bus Show

MERCEDES 410D, 16 high back M2 coach seats covered in moquette, lap and diagonal seat restraints, driver's seat retrimmed to match, 2 luggage racks, moquette centre roof panel, top quality lino floor, interior lights, quadvent, tinted windows, wheel trims, modesty panel drop entrance step, decorative curtains, dri-.£29,720

PEUGEOT BOXER, wheelchair accessible, diesel, LWB, hi roof, 16 high back coach seats covered in moquette, seats removable for wheelchairs, lap and diagonal belts, drivers and passenger seats retrimmed to match saloon seats, tinted windows, lowerable suspension with ramp, non slip lino floor ......£26,560

Mick Morgan Dartford (01322) 228538

**David McKinless** Doncaster (01302) 328888

Please phone for current stock list covering approximately 20 minicoaches



# WESTERN COMMERCIAL

#### **NEW STOCK**

814D MERCEDES VARIO PLAXTON, 33 seat, air suspension. 711 MERCEDES, 29 seats, coachbuilt, power door, seat belts. 614 MERCEDES VARIO, 24 seats, power door, coach spec., luxury, 810 MERCEDES PLAXTON, 29+33 seats, service spec. 8 weeks,

#### USED

1995 (N) 711 MERCEDES, 25 coach seats

1995 (M) FORD TRANSIT, 15 seat, seatbelts, PSV.

1994 (L) 609 MERCEDES, 24 seats, power door, deep boot.

1994 (L) FORD TRANSIT, 15 seat + driver. Non PSV.

1991 (H) MERCEDES 410D, 15 seats 1985 MERCEDES 307, 4 seats plus tail-lift, plus tracking.

BRIDGE STREET, NEWBRIDGE, NR EDINBURGH CONTACT JOHN LEITCH on 0131 333 2001 or EVENINGS 01357 521888

#### CONCEPT COACHCRAFT

NEW MERCEDES VARIO 614, 24 hi-back seats, 3 point belts, soft trim, boxed for TV and Video, large drop boot £39,995 + VAT + **Road Fund Licence** 

NEW 312 SPRINTER, LWB, hi roof, 15 seats, off side door, rear boot area, hi spec £27,500 + VAT + Road Fund Licence - In Stock Now

NEW 412 SPRINTER, LWB, hi roof, 16 seats, off side door, rear boot area, hi spec £30,500 + VAT + Road Fund Licence

NEW 512 VARIO, 20 seats, hi spec, independent heater £33,500 + VAT + Road Fund Licence - In Stock Now

> For immediate delivery Tel: 0161 406 9322 (Daytime)

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#### TOYOTA OPTIMO II COACHES!

1991 TOYOTA OPTIMO II GL, reclining seats, plus courier, large boot, radio/PA, full carpet, one prestigious owner from new, MoT 1998 .last.one. . . . £22,500 1991 TOYOTA OPTIMO II GL, 21 seat + courier, fitted lap belts and radio, offered 

NEW TOYOTA OPTIMO IV, 21 SEATER. IMMEDIATE DELIVERY

London Road (A6), Oadby, Leicester. LE2 4RG Tel: (0116) 259 2131. Fax: (0116) 259 2313 TOYOTA PARTS AND SERVICE **Contact Bryn Taylor** 

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Quality Part exchange welcome on all vehicles new and pre-owned

NEW MERCEDES 0.1120L OPTARE SOLERA, 35 reclining seats, courier seat, seat belts, large luggage capacity, power entrance door, forced air ventilation, curtains, heated mirrors, drivers' door with electric window, R PA cassette, air suspension to the rear. LIMITED AVAILABILITY.

NEW MERCEDES 814D Nouvelle I, 29 seats plus courier. Immediately available at a special price.

1990 (G) SCANIA K93 VAN HOOL, 55 reclining seats, plus courier. 1991 (H) MERCEDES 709D, 25 DP seats, power door, large boot. 1989 (F) MERCEDES 811D, 21 coach seats, painted in white, rear slam doors.

5 mins junction 11 M5 (Cheltenham-Glos)
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whether you are looking for new or previously owned we have an extensive stock of 8 Seater Taxi-buses

. Wheelchair accessible Taxi and Taxi Buses.

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Prices start at just £18,995 or £89 per week.

Fiat Scudo and EuroCab 2000. 6 - 8 seaters. Private Hire and full Hackney specification. We have a huge range in stock right now. Unbeatable value for money. Luxury models or full Rank Compatible. These vehicles are unbeatable value for money and are fully tested to he latest European regs.

Ducato Diesel Taxi Bus. Luxury 8 seater with wheelchair tracking. Luxury high backed seats with diagonal seat belts. Front luggage pen, tinted windows. Beautifully stylish and elegant. Perfect for airport transfer or high class private hire work.

Only £15,995 or just £74 per week.

New Conversions - High Quality - Wheelchair accessible Taxi Buses.

J to P Ford 2.5 D Luxury 8 seater taxi buses. Choice of colours and specification. Including, semi-high top, rear tail gate, front luggage pens, wheelchair track. All fitted with super luxury M2 tested seats and diag seat belts.

Buy, lease or finance from only £8,995 or just £40 per week

seats and diag seat belts. Buy, lease or finance from only 28,995 or just £40 per week.

N Ducato Diesel Luxury 8 seater taxi buses. High back M2 seats and diag seat belts. Super luxury trim. Front high volume luggage pen. Tinted windows. Tracking for rear wheelchair. Superb throughout. Top value for money whether you buy, lease or use one of our low deposit finance plans. buy at just £66 per week.

N, M and L. Choice of 8. Various specs and colours. All superb with M2 seats and belts. Come along and see for yourself. Prices start from only

and see for yourself. Prices start from only

Nolkswagon. Super luxury 8 seater Private hire vehicles. Superbly stylish. Luxury seating and fixtures. Wheelchair tracking. M2 seats and diag belts. Choice of colours and options. Find them only
at Jubilee

M Renault Traffic 8 seater taxi buses. Mint condition, low mileage diesel Taxi
buses. Choice of
colours and specs. new M2 luxury conversions with wheelchair tracking. Superb value for money.
Low floor, easy access. Style and space.

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Due to Fleet Replacement. Choice of three. Cummins engine, disk front brakes, 25 seats, MoT. White with blue skirt.

ALL GOOD RUNNERS 0114 251 0545

#### Following fleet replacement we have the following vehicles for sale:

All have current MoT's. All are equipped with tail lifts. 08-16 seats with seat belts.Mileages 80-150,000. Various colours

1989 Freeways (Choice of 2). £3,700 1990 Freeways (Choice of 2). £5,000 1990 Iveco Mellor. £7,500 1991 Freeway . . . . . . . £7,500 1991 Freeway . . . . . . . . £8,500 1992 J Oatia . . . . . . . £8,500

> **Telephone:** 01784 243264 66980/MM

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Dealer for Autobus

SUPPLIER OF THE NOUVELLE EXECUTIF 1995/96 MIDICOACH OF THE YEAR

IMMEDIATE DELIVERY

MERCEDES 814 VARIO NOUVELLE 29 seat + courier MERCEDES 814D VARIO VAN, 24 seats and courier and boot MERCEDES SPRINTER, 16 seats

EARLY DELIVERY

LEYLAND DAF, 16 seats **USED VEHICLES** 

1996 (N) MERCEDES 814D, 33 seat, Nouvelle 1996 (N) FORD TRANSIT TORNEO, 8 seater 1993 K MERCEDES 410D, 16 seater

1989 (F reg) RENAULT MASTER, 14 seats with tables, underfloor luggage,
TV + video facility
1989 (F reg) FORD TRANSIT, 16 seater with tail lift
1989 G REG MERCEDES 811, 24 seater, boot
Telephone Steve Peach Tel: (01302) 770863/(0836) 551020

**UTOBUS** 

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Part exchange available on all new vehicles. Finance arranged subject to status



Choice of two. New MoTs to 11.98. One 16 bus seats + 5 standees for £1950, other 16

coach seats with belts for £2950. Clean, tidy vehicles.

"Maintained to high standards in our workshops, service records available"

#### Chalkwell Coaches (North Kent) **□ 01795 423982**

# TOYOTA OPTIMO III

1995, 21 seats plus courier, drivers door, radio/PA, seatbelts, very low mileage, white exterior, as new condition, one owner from new

£42,500 Tel: 01722 743470

#### SERVICE BUS

PLAXTON POINTER, ultra low floor, 41 + standees + wheelchair ramp if required. Immediate delivery. Part ex welcome. Tel: Blythswood Motors 0141 221 3165 or 0141 639 6107 eves.

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COACH AND BUS WEEK ending 16 October 1997 61

**NEOPLAN** 

**MERCEDES V8 TWIN TURBO** 

Tel: 01922 414576

1986 Neoplan Skyliner

Gardner engine, ZF automatic, 77

seats, TV/video, toilet etc, recent

retrim "tidy", MoT 3/98, seatbelts

fitted £38,000 Plus tyres and VAT

Davies Bros, Pencader

01559 384 821

**SCANIA** 

1990 (January)

**SCANIA** 

**VAN HOOL** 

55 seater

£65,000

Contact: Andrew Bull

Country Lion (Northampton) Ltd

FOR SALE

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21 seater plus courier, mint

condition, fitted TV/video

and towbar.

Part exchange considered

£45,500+VAT

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#### **Country Lion (Northampton) Ltd**

VOLVO

Offer the following Volvo's due to Fleet reorganisation

1994 (Oct) Volvo Plaxton Premiere, 53 seater .....£115,000 1991 (March) Volvo Plaxton 3500, 49/53 seater with demountable toilet ......£85,000 1990 (April) Volvo Plaxton 3200, fitted wheelchair lift 49 to 57 seater £72,500

1990 (Sept) Volvo Ikarus 336, 53 seater ......£60,000 1980 (March) Volvo Caetano Alpha, fitted wheelchair lift .....£12,000

> Contact: Andrew Bull Phone 01604 754566

66890/VO

#### 1989 (F) Volvo Van Hool Alizee



#### FOUR SEASONS TRAVEL

Immaculate condition throughout. Maintained regardless of cost by Volvo Main Agent. Our business is exclusively with top class bands/corporate clients with the UK – work available to the right buyer. Internally as a Lounge-liner comprises 24 reclining seats. 4 tables, WC, kitchen area with tridge/water/microwave, rear 6 seater lounge with video/monitor/multi-CD, all professionally fitted. OR convert in 4/5 hours to full 49 seater Executive, with all facilities. Double glazed, curtains, fully carpeted, Webasto, front video, Vodaphone, 6 new tyres, tested April 98

THIS IS A FIRST CLASS COACH – OUR PREVIOUS SOLD WITHIN 1 HOUR

£75,000 TEL: 0191 3783535

**VOLVO B10M** 

**JONCKHEERE** 

**BERMUDA 1981** 

49 seats plus courier, seat

belts, toilet, fridge, coffee,

drivers' bunk, wired for sights

and sounds, long MoT

£18.750 + VAT

0181 881 3336

95 (M) VOLVO B9M Mk IV VAN HOOL ALIZEE H. 10 metres, ZF gearbox, 38 R&C, toilet, full servery with fridge, water

sink and cupboard Badio/PA/ cassette, monitor and wired for video. Low mileage. As new. Price: £122,500. Contact Gary Wilson 0141

956 3636.

# AVA lever vacilitie "

# **GLE DUPLE 320**

310bhp intercooled engine, 12 speed ZF splitter gearbox, Telma retarder, Eberspacher r, Sutrak air conditioning, 53 Vogel

£49,950 ono

May take P/X 01925 221792 Eves 226334 or 291037

# **VINTAGE**



#### 1964 **LEYLAND PD3/4**

ex Rossendale Transport

MoT Class 5 to May 1998

Tel: 01347 810373

# End of Season Clearance Sale of the

1981 LEOPARD, Plaxton body, 53 seats, semi automatic, will MoT for one . £5,000 ono

September, 1998 (white) .£4,000

1984 METROLINER, 75 seats, good condition, will MoT test £10,000 ono Coatbridge, Scotland Tel: 01236 423621

# 1988 VOLVO BIOM

neater, Sutrak air Conditioning, 35 object reclining seats, retractable seatbelts, Blaupunkt TV, video, hot water boiler, double glazing, toilet, excellent all round condition. Finance arranged, subject to status.

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#### 62 COACH AND BUS WEEK ending 16 October 1997





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49 reclining seats, centre sunken toilet, continental door, fridge, water boiler, driver's bunk, wired for video/monitor. Interior -grey/red; Exterior - silver. MOT April 1998.

#### 1995 SCANIA IRIZAR CENTURY

49 reclining seats, air conditioning, toilet, continental door, video & monitor, fridge, water boiler. Interior -autumn tint; Exterior - red/orange. MOT May 1998.

#### 1992 BOVA FUTURA FHD

53/57 reclining seats, centre sunken demountable toilet, continental door, wired for video/monitor, driver's bunk.

Interior -autumn tint; Exterior - white. MOT December 1997

#### 1992 VOLVO B10M VAN HOOL ALIZEE D/H

48 reclining seats, rear floor mounted toilet, servery with fridge, water boiler. Interior - blue/grey; Exterior - white/yellow/blue. MOT December 1997

#### 1990 DAF SB2300 JONCKHEERE DEAUVILLE

51 reclining seats, centre sunken toilet, continental door, water boiler, wired for video/monitor.

Interior - grey/maroon; Exterior - white. MOT March 1998.

#### **1990 VOLVO B10M PLAXTON 3500**

49 reclining seats, centre sunken toilet, continental door, aircraft type lockers. Interior -brown, Exterior- white. MOT May 1998

#### 1988 VOLVO B10M PLAXTON 4000

65 reclining seats, toilet, water boiler, wired for video/monitor, TELMA retarder, Interior -autumn tint; Exterior -white. MOT March 1998 1987 BEDFORD YNV DUPLE 320

53 reclining seats, power door. Interior -autumn tint; Exterior -white/red. MOT April 1998

#### 1987 FREIGHT ROVER

20 seats, power door.Exterior-white. MOT August 1998. 1987 VOLVO B10M PLAXTON 3200

49 reclining seats, rear floor level toilet. Interior -autumn tint; Exterior - white. MOT March 1998

#### 1986 NEOPLAN SKYLINER

#### (Gardner Engine, Auto Transmission).

77 reclining seats, toilet, servery with fridge & water boiler Interior -red: Exterior - white. MOT October 1998

#### 1986 BOVA FUTURA FHD

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49 reclining seats, rear sunken toilet, continental door. Interior - autumn tint; Exterior - white. MOT March 1998.

#### 1985 FORD TRANSIT 190 (Diesel)

16 seats, power operated door. Interior - brown; Exterior - white. MOT March 1998.

#### 1984 DAF DKFL CAETANO ALGARVE

50 reclining seats, rear floor level toilet, continental door. Interior -autumn tint; Exterior white. MOT July 1998.

#### 1983 VOLVO B10M JONCKHEERE P90

58 reclining seats, toilet, water boiler. Interior -brown; Exterior -red/white. MOT July 1998

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1988 BOVA FUTURA FHD/12/29/INTEGRAL, 49 reclining seats, courier seat, centre sunken toilet, continental door, exterior white

1988 (August) BOVA FUTURA FHD/12/29 INTEGRAL, 49 reclining seats, courier seat, centre sunken toilet, continental door, exterior white

1985 LEYLAND TIGER 245 TL11, BERKHOF EVEREST, 49 reclining seats and courier seat, continental door, sunken toilet, wiring for video

1983 VOLVO B10M JONCKHEERE P90, 57 seats, toilet, long MoT, Dateless plate, exterior plain white

1982 LEYLAND LEOPARD ECW dual purpose, 49 bus seats, MoT February 1998

1979 VOLVO B58 DUPLE DOMINANT, 53 seater, very clean interior, new MoT

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COACH AND BUS WEEK ending 16 October 1997 63

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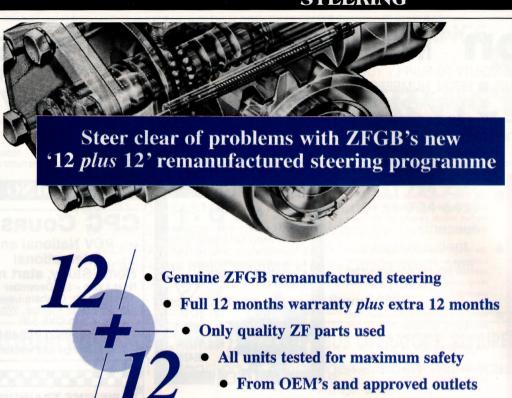
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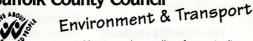
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# Highways chief quits

KENT County Council's director of highways and transportation, Allan Mowatt, is leaving at the end of this month.

Mr Mowatt has overseen a sea change in the county's transport policies, the council's reorganisation and the merging of highways, transportation, planning, economic development and regulatory services departments into a new directorate.

Highways and transportation has secured record levels of investment including money from the Lottery, the EU and a ground-breaking loan shared between public and private sectors.

More recently, Mr Mowatt - vice-president of the County Surveyors Society - has influenced a change in transport policy for Kent, developing a more sustainable approach to transport planning. Through-ticketing initiatives for bus and rail, bus priority using sat-nav technology, and proposals for the Thames-side and Medway Metros explain this approach.

"I will be sorry to leave Kent, but this gives me the opportunity to pursue different areas of work within my profession," said Mr Mowatt. "I am proud of what we have achieved in Kent, which is without parallel anywhere else, and I pay tribute to my excellent staff."

#### FAJ Woodworth

**OMNIBUS** SOCIETY 'Gold' member FAJ (Frank) Woodworth has died. He had a distinguished management career with the BET group through the NBC days and was latterly involved with the Ensign Tours project in Birmingham.

# Promotion marks after-sales drive

DENNIS' commercial and marketing manager Paul Govier has been promoted to the post of commercial manager of after-sales.

Mr Govier is part of Dennis' drive to invest in its customer service operation and provide operators with a higher level of support: "We are determined to maintain and improve service levels to all our customers," said Dave Berry, customer service

"Paul's appointment is a measure of the importance we attach to achieving this. One of Paul's primary responsibilities will be developing the company's parts business both in the UK and overseas.

"He will play a pivotal role in ensuring we deliver the quality of parts service our customers expect."

Mr Govier will continue



Paul Govier: continues to be based at Guildford

to be based at the offices at Opus Park, Guildford. Before joining Dennis in

1993, Mr Govier worked in a similar role in the automotive industry.

#### Founder of Alexcars dies

ALEC Hibberd, founder of Alexcars of Cirencester, has died aged 76.

Mr Hibberd worked as a lathe turner during the war, machining parts for aero engines, among other things. He set up the rural company in 1946 with two cars, converting an old London ambulance as his first PSV, and moving on from there. In the heyday of the company, in the mid 80s, he ran 18 vehicles.

He was well known in the industry, not least for his unwavering support of charities and membership of the CPT. The company now runs 13 vehicles, six of which are used on its own UK tour programme, the rest on local contracts.

Mr Hibberd had a stroke shortly before the company's 50th anniversary, and had gone into semi-retirement. He leaves a widow, Barbara, son Rod - who has taken the reins - and daughter Jennifer, whose husband, Will Jarvis, is transport manager.

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Ref: 6949

#### 1992 J VOLVO BIOM PLAXTON PREMIERE 350, 48 RECLINING SEATS

Exterior White, Interior Brown & Orange Moquette, Telma Retarder, Radio, Pa, Microphone, Cassette, Wheel Discs, Driver Operated Door, Air Conditioning, ABS, Webasto, Rear Window, Tinted Windows, Double Glazing, Curtains, Continental Door, Crew Seat and Toilet.

Ref. 0997



#### 1990 G VOLYO BIOM JONCKHEERE DEAUVILLE, 51 RECLINING SEATS

Exterior White, Interior Grey Moquette, Exhaust Brake, Wiring for TV, Radio, Pa, Microphone, Cassette, Driver Operated Door, Side Locker, Rack Locker, Rear Window, Tinted Windows, Peage Window, Double Glazing, Curtains, Continental Door, Tea/Coffee Machine, Armrests, Crew Seat, Provision for Crew Compartment, Toilet.

Ref: 0271

#### 1990 G VOLVO B10M PLAXTON PARAMOUNT 3500, 57 SEATS

Exterior White, Interior Brown Moquette, Exhaust Brake, Radio, Pa, Microphone, Cassette, Wheel Discs, Driver Operated Door, Drivers Fan, Side Locker, Rack Locker, Rear Windows, Tinted Windows, Curtains and Crew Seat.

Ref: 0132

#### 1990 G LEYLAND TIGER PLAXTON PARAMOUNT 3500, CUMMINS L10 ENGINE, 55 RECLINING SEATS

Exterior Green, Interior Red Moquette, Telma Retarder, Radio, Pa, Microphone, Cassette, Driver Operated Door, Drivers Fan, Courier Fan, Side and Rack Lockers, Double Glazing, Curtains, Continental Door and Crew Seat.

Ref: 0950



#### 1990 PRIVATE VOLVO BIOM T (TRI AXLE) VAN HOOL SUPER HIGH, 49 SEATS

Exterior Blue & Yellow, Interior Brown Moquette, Exhaust Brake, Wiring For TV/Video, Radio, Pa, Cassette, Wheel Discs, Driver Operated Door, Webasto, Tinted Windows, Peage, Window, Double Glazing, Blinds, Continental Door, Tea/Coffee Machine, Fridge, Crew Seat, Crew Compartment and Rear Toilet.

Ref: 0259

#### 1993 K DENNIS JAVELIN PLAXTON PREMIERE 320, 53 RECLINING SEATS

Exterior Multi Coloured, Interior Brown Striped Moquette, Radio, Pa, Microphone, Cassette, Wheel Discs, Driver Operated Door, Pannier Locker, Aircraft Locker, Rear Window, Tinted Windows, Double Glazing, Curtains, Continental Door and Seat Belts.

Ref: 1045

#### 1989 PRIVATE KASSBOHRER SETRA MERCEDES V8 INTEGRAL S215 HR, 49 RECLINING SEATS

Exterior White, Orange and Grey, Interior Grey and Blue Moquette, Voith Retarder, TV, Radio, Pa, Microphone, Cassette, Plug Door, ABS, Pannier Lockers, Rack Lockers, Tinted Windows, Curtains, Continental Door, Hot and Cold Water, Coolbox, Crew Seat and Toilet.

Ref: 0966

#### 1986 C MERCEDES INTEGRAL KASSBOHRER SETRA, 53 RECLINING SEATS

Exterior Multi Coloured, Interior Brown Moquette, Voith Retarder, Radio, Pa, Microphone, Cassette, Wheel Discs, Driver Operated Door, Driver's Fan, Courier Fan, Side Lockers, Rack Lockers, Rear Window, Tinted Windows, Curtains, Continental Door, Magazine Nets, Armrests and Crew Seat. *Ref:* 0285

#### 1988 E DENNIS JAVELIN DUPLE 320, 57 FIXED SEATS

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